The Giddy Gusher Papers

Mary H. Fiske

THE

GIDDY GUSHER PAPERS

BY

MARY H. FISKE

EDITED BY HARRISON GREY FISKE

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"Mary Fiske was like herself. She patterned after none. She was a genius, and put her soul into everything she did and wrote. She cared nothing for roads, nothing for beaten paths, nothing for the footsteps of others. She went across the fields, and through the woods, and by the winding streams, and down the vales, or over crags, wherever fancy led. She wrote lines that leaped with laughter, and words that were wet with tears. She gave us quaint thoughts and sayings filled with the 'pert and nimble spirit of mirth.' Her pages were flecked with sunshine and shadow, and in every word were the pulse and breath of life. Within her brain was the divine fire called genius, and in her heart the 'touch of nature that makes the whole world kin.' She wrote as a stream runs, that winds and babbles through the shadowy fields, that falls in foam of flight and haste, and, laughing, joins the sea."—ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE products of Mary Fiske's fertile brain found their way into the world through the medium of the press. The preservation in permanent form of at least a portion of her writings is no more than a deserved tribute to her genius and her memory.

The sketches presented in this book have been selected from the four hundred articles contributed to the columns of the *Dramatic Mirror* by Mrs. Fiske during the eight years that she was a member of its staff. The sole difficulty encountered by the Editor in making this compilation lay in the perplexities of choosing from so large and rich a store of material. The endeavor has been to include, within the space available, that which seemed most characteristic and representative of the gifted journalist's thought and style.

As "The Giddy Gusher," Mrs. Fiske was known and loved by thousands—not only of the members of the theatrical profession whom she especially addressed, and to whose chivalrous championship her generous pen was constantly devoted, but also a multitude that sought her articles with a zest born of wholesome admiration for the striking originality and amazing versatility of the writer. Her strong personality unmistakably impressed itself on every line she wrote, and this brought her into a familiar and delightful intimacy with her readers.

As a humorist, Mary Fiske was irresistible. Her pathos touched a universal chord of human sympathy. Her

eloquence, wit, and imaginative variety were inexhaustible. She cherished an honest hatred for all forms of sham. The conventional was contemptible to her free, unfettered nature. Her peculiar genius for expression defied the foot-rule of literary criticism. It was *sui generis*. She wrote in her own way, and it was a way that appealed to heart and fancy.

H. G. F.

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The Giddy Gusher Papers.

A TRIBUTE OF SONG.

There is no place on earth where man's utter helplessness comes out so strongly, where the ceremonies in human use fall so powerless before the majesty of the occasion, as at a funeral. It need not be that one's heart shall be interested. The obsequies of a stranger, conducted with all the pomp and vanity of church and state, with the melancholy rolling drum of the military funeral, or the gorgeousness of the Masonic regalia apron—all are alike inadequate and unavailing.

But once in my life have I witnessed a ceremony that was as grand and impressive as the silent, awful occasion of it.

I will tell you of a funeral which lingers in my memory as the grandest, most solemn and befitting ceremony that was ever given to the dead.

It was many years ago that a poor, widowed woman, leading a hard life of unending labor, was called to part with the one thing dear to her—her only child. Mother and daughter had toiled together for fifteen years, and the only bit of sunshine falling into their dark lives was that shed by their loving companionship. But the girl had been always sickly. Under the heart-broken mother's eyes she faded and wasted away with consumption, and

at last the day came when the wan face failed to answer with its ghastly smile the anxious, tear-blinded eyes of the mother.

The poor young creature was dead. For many months the pair had been supported by the elder woman's sewing, and it was in the character of employer I had become acquainted with Mrs. Cramp and her story. By an occasional visit to the awful heights of an East-side tenement where they lived, by a few books and with some comforting words, I had won the love of the dying girl. Her grateful thoughts turned in her last hours to the small number of friends she possessed, and she besought her mother to notify me of the day of her funeral and ask me to attend.

That summons reached me upon one of the wildest days preceding Christmas. A sleet that was not rain, and a rain that was not snow, came pelting from all points of the compass. A wind that wailed in the chimney and howled in the street told how truly dreadful for out-door purposes was the weather of the day. I piled the glowing grates; I drew closer the curtains and shut out the gloom of the December afternoon; I turned on the gas and sat down devoutly thankful that I had cut all connection with the wicked weather—when an instalment of it burst in on me in the shape of Parepa Rosa. She was Euphrosyne Parepa at that time, and the operatic idol of the city. Muffed with tippets—flecked with snow—glowing with the short encounter she had had with the elements—rushing up the steps from her carriage, she threw herself into an easy chair and proclaimed the horrors of the outer world to be beyond description.

And even as we congratulated ourselves on the prospect of a delightful day together, there came the summons for me to go to the humble funeral of the poor

sewing-woman's daughter. I turned the little tear-blotted note over and groaned.

"This is terrible," said I; "it's just the one errand that could take me out to-day; but I *must* go." And then I told Parepa the circumstances and speculated on the length of time I should be gone, and suggested means of amusement in my absence.

"But I shall go with you," said the great, good-hearted creature.

"Your throat, and old Bateman, and your concert to-night!" I pleaded.

"If I get another 'froggy' note in my voice it won't matter much; I'm hoarse as a raven now," she returned.

So she re-wound her throat with the long white comforter, pulled on her worsted gloves, and off in the storm we went together. We climbed flight after flight of narrow, dark stairs to the top floor, where the widow dwelt in a miserable little room not more than a dozen feet square. The canvas-back hearse peculiar to the twenty-five-dollar funeral stood in the street below, and the awful cherry-stained box with its ruffle of glazed white muslin stood on uncovered trestles in the centre of the room above.

There was the mother, speechless in her grief, beside that box—a group of hard-working, kindly-hearted neighbors sitting about. It was useless to say the poor woman was prepared for the inevitable end—it was cold comfort to speak to her of the daughter's release from pain and suffering. The bereft creature in her utter loneliness was thinking of herself and the awful future—of the approaching moment when that box and its precious burden would be taken away and leave her wholly alone. So, therefore, with a sympathizing grasp of the poor worn, bony hand, we sat silently down to "attend the funeral."

The undertaker's man, with a screw-driver in his hand, jumped about in the passage to keep warm. The creaky boots of the minister belonging to the twenty-five-dollar funeral were heard on the stairs. There was a catarrhal conversation held outside between them, as to the enormity of the weather, and (probably) the bad taste of the deceased in selecting such a time to die was discussed. Then the minister came in with a pious sniff, and stood revealed, a regular Stiggins as to get-up—a dry, self-sufficient man, icier than the day, and colder than the storm.

He deposited his hat and black gloves and wet umbrella on the poor little bed in the corner; he slapped his hands vigorously together; he took himself in well-merited fashion by the ears and pulled them into glowing sensation, and after thawing out for a moment, plunged into business.

He rattled merrily through some selected sentences from the Bible. He gave us a prayer that sounded like peas in a dried bladder, and he came to "Amen" with a jerk that brought me up like a patent snaffle. He pulled on his old gloves and grabbed his rusty hat, and with his umbrella dribbling inky tears over the well-scrubbed floor, he offered a set form of condolence to the broken-hearted mother. He told her of her sin in rebelling against the decrees of Providence. He assured her that nothing could bring the dead back. He inveighed against the folly of the world in general and this poor woman in particular; and then he made a horrid blunder, and showed he didn't know even the sex of the dead, by saying: "*He* cannot come to you, but you must go to *him*."

This was a settler for Parepa and myself. We looked at the departing minister in blank astonishment.

The door swung wide ; we saw the screw-driver waving in the air as the undertaker's man held converse with the clergyman. A hush fell on everybody gathered in the little room. Not one word had been uttered of consolation, of solemn import, or befitting the occasion. It was the emptiest, hollowest, most unsatisfactory moment I ever remember.

Then Parepa rose, her cloak falling about her noble figure like mourning drapery. She stood beside that miserable cherrywood box. She looked a moment on the pinched, wasted, ashy face upturned toward her from within it. She laid her soft white hand on the discolored forehead of the dead girl, and she lifted up that matchless voice in the beautiful melody :

> "Angels ever bright and fair,
> Take, O take her to your care."

The screw-driver paused in describing an airy circle ; the wet umbrella stood pointing down the stairs ; the two men with astonished faces were foremost in a crowd that instantly filled the passages. The noble voice swelled toward Heaven, and if ever the choirs of Paradise paused to listen to Earth's music, it was when Parepa sang so gloriously beside that poor dead girl.

No words can describe its effect on those gathered there. The sad mourner sank on her knees, and with clasped hands and streaming eyes the little band stood reverently about her.

No queen ever went to her grave accompanied by a grander ceremony. To this day, Parepa's glorious tribute of song rings with solemn melody in my memory, as the only real, impressive funeral service I ever heard.

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCES.

THERE is no sort of doubt existing in that thinking-machine of mine that Heaven and Destiny intended we should scratch round like so many hens and get our living off and out of the earth. It's fun from first to last, from sowing to harvest. Having lately become a farmer, I speak by the schedule on which true happiness is run to the best of my information and belief. It was quite the fashion a few years ago to ridicule Horace Greeley as an agriculturist, and some of the papers are at present knocking out a good deal of fun from the exploits of Hayes as a poulterer.

Make no mistake and don't hope to laugh at your bucolic Gusher. She has been a success from the hour she broke ground in March and began to plant things. She didn't put out egg-plants for spring chickens, nor plant horse-chestnuts with a wild idea of seeing chestnut horses coming up like cabbages; but she put in a peck of tomato seeds in March and they froze or rotted in the ground and never showed up in May one single seed. But one day, travelling through a down-town street, she saw tomato-vines a foot high; she bought a load of 'em, and gave a man a dollar to climb up to her farm as early as five next morning, and in the seclusion of the shubbery put them out.

The astonishment of the rest of the country knew no bounds, and a coalition was at once formed between your astute Gusher and this man, who is as near being a tramp

as a man who will do a day's work occasionally can be. My ally informs me what seed I shall plant one morning. I do it ostentatiously, and put up little pigmy posts, with cards neatly lettered stuck on top of 'em. These agricultural guide-posts inform you that here lie buried verbenas or petunias or gladiola or tuberose bulbs. My wicked partner never fails me. As soon as it's light enough to read he pulls up a stake ; sees that I have put beside it a gladiola bulb ; he selects from his assortment one that has made its way in the world, and has a green flag ten inches long flying. This he plants, replaces the tag beside the flourishing plant, and goes on this way with all the rest. The natives gather 'round and tell about backward springs and miracles in horticulture ; ask me if I put anything into the ground except the old case-knife and the seed they see me sow ; ask me if I have always been considered to be like other folks, and if I am gifted in any other way beside making things grow.

In this way I have greatly astonished my innocent neighbors, and now I've begun on the rest of the inhabitants. I find a hen's capacity for amazement is very great. My ally, who now works round on the place, said one day : " Some o' them hens wants to set."

I sent him off for new-laid eggs, and in twenty-four hours I had several hens on as many nests, and just as many eggs under 'em as I could tuck away out o' sight. The tramp advised me to buy eggs by the barrel and set the hen on the bung-hole. This may have been scarcasm, but when an old speckled girl named Hannah came off with twenty-three chickens no one knew that I had stolen ten from Mrs. Phœbe and Aunty Brown, two noble old hens in the barn that belong to the landlord, who is round bemoaning to this day that Aunty should have only one chick and Miss Phœbe four. Hannah's chickens were

about fifteen minutes old when I brought a hatful from the barn and let 'em loose beside her in a little coop. I threw her in a handful of egg-shells to account for the large family, and she never weakened.

Now, then, a Shanghai named Miranda had been sitting on thirteen eggs for fourteen days when a little gray hen of mine evinced an intention to make a nest. I had made omelettes of her incipient family, and felt called on to see her through. I took a cigar-box full of eggs to the barn, and after a vigorous protest on the part of Miranda, got her off the nest long enough to take her thirteen warm eggs and substitute thirteen fresh ones. These we put in the gray hen's coop and let nature take its course. In less than a week my little gray mother-hen came off with a dozen chickens, and I tell you a more excited bird I never saw. She walked into the bar and sat on the back of a chair ten minutes examining the almanac. She knows she wasn't on that family as long as she ought to have been, and she gathers 'em under her now and tries to sit it out. But then I know several mothers whose broods have grown up, and some of 'em are twenty years of age, and the old girls sit on the family to this day.

But the gray hen is the wonder of the poultry. She took her chickens and paraded in front of Miranda, who was peacefully sitting on my dozen store-eggs, and the mother instinct is strong. She looked at my little stump-tailed pullet and the twelve stalwart, long-legged Shanghai chickens that stalked beside her, and she routed the whole party.

It's often thought that the world treated people very much as they deserved, and the better a person deserved the better the world treated 'em. It's precisely the same way with hens. A muddy-colored little chicken got its leg hurt and went lame, and the whole fleet of hens bore

down on her and pecked and maltreated her. The poor thing led a horrible life till I caught her and painted her head with gold paint, and made eyes like peacock's, with iridescent paint all down her sides, and gilded her legs, and when she was quite dry I let her loose among her former persecutors. The effect was stunning. That hen walked into the sun, and she was something dazzling. The unpainted hens were dazed with admiration. She has received the unremitting attentions ever since of the four roosters belonging to my farm. Duels are daily fought on her account and my premises. What will happen when the gilding soaks off I can't say ; but at present she is the bossess and queen of the coop.

Yes, the affairs of a poultry-yard are very much like the affairs of human beings, and the affairs of a little settlement are conducted in the same selfish, sacrificing way as the affairs of a nation.

One of the loveliest places to be found is up here, where I have pitched my tent and am running the miracle farm. It's just near enough to the city to allow my getting all I want of it. I can see a new play and leave a theatre at eleven o'clock, and in fifteen minutes from the Forty-second Street depot stand on the farm, with the odors of the green-growing things flooding the air around me, the nice, quiet, country stars blinking over me, and the great solemn arches of the High Bridge sweeping off into darkness, and the pleasant little Harlem River rippling beneath them. The night-cry of a bird in the maple-tree and the cheerful swearing of a brakeman making up a freight-train on the Hudson River road mix delightfully together, and I am glad to be alive.

THE HOSPITAL OVER THE WAY.

I NEVER fully realized how often the human head got broken until my most intimate friend moved down opposite the New York Hospital. Her husband is by fits the most practical and sentimental man in America. You take him one day, and the laying of an egg by a careless hen fills his soul with anxiety about a future omelette; and you take him the next, and you might saw my poor Maria's leg off before his eyes and he wouldn't flinch. But in both positions he issues unpleasant opinions, and as they struck their new quarters when his heart was tender, Maria was frightened by the dread forebodings of her Ichabod.

"Put me at the back of the house," said he. "The clang of that ambulance fills me with pain."

"Why should it," said Maria, "as long as I didn't ring for it?"

"And the sight of those dreadful walls are hideous, enclosing so much human misery," he continued.

"Moreover, it is built of parti-colored bricks and a heap sight more cheerful than the Metropolitan Opera House. The misery there is alleviated, which is more than I can say for that across the street." And Maria got in one on Ichabod.

Then Maria and I just began to look at the hospital, to see if He or She had the right of it. And in its study we have found much to interest and more to amuse.

The early-morning politician with the broken head is

one of the funniest features of the season. A coach with a few friends drives up at six. At that hour I am struggling with Dana on Cleveland or Bennett on Blaine, but instantly I take a greater interest in the evidence of a great political issue which is being carefully decanted from the coach across the way. His coat is torn, his necktie is hanging, and the blood so incarnadines his face that it's a question if he is a white man or a Fifteenth amendment of one. His friends boost him in through the great iron gates and the coach patrols the street. After a good hour of this exercise it stops, to take on board the repaired article, and here the laugh comes in. The doctors have plastered and patched him, and put a poultice on the north side of him, and mounted a sort of white night-cap on top of all the other white fragments, and aloft, on a small embankment where a peculiarly big lump occurred, one of the officer's friends had perched the sufferer's little black derby hat. You talk of funny sights! That exhibition takes place almost every morning, and if your windows were open my howl of delight would reach you.

The other day an ambulance arrived with a stout Irish fellow, so thoroughly broken up that they just dished him out as if he was picnic chowder. The big iron gates had hardly clanged behind him before a stalwart Biddy with a stove-lifter braced herself against the railing. She had evidently brought her work home herself.

Several adherents stood at a respectful distance, when a jolly-faced man on a milk-cart addressed her :

"Fwat's the matter, Mrs. Mulcahy?"

"They're puttin' a new lid on Mike in beyant."

"Was it an accident?"

"No, it was meself."

"That was too bad of ye, Mrs. Mulcahy."

"Arrah, was it indade? Av yees had seen the red head of her, and Mike walkin' it round the Par'ak, ye'd a'seen fwat he took his midicine for. It's here I'll land him ivery toime I catch him at it."

Just here the gates creaked a little and a policeman, who had ridden in unnoticed on the ambulance, shot out and grabbed Mrs. Mulcahy—stove-lifter and all.

A short, sharp struggle, and down the street with his prize walked the copper. Maria and I silently rise and shake hands. The hospital has its consolations.

Now, then, it's nine o'clock, and rattling up to the main entrance comes a big, many-seated Park wagon, and lifted carefully in are a score or more of white-faced, puny little children—some of 'em bandaged, some of 'em in splints, some of 'em in strange apparatus for straightening backs or lifting heads, but all joyful at the expectation of a ride.

I wonder it doesn't strike the wealthy woman or the married man oftener than it does to do something for these magnificent hospitals of ours. Why, for a few dollars you can have a whole afternoon's solid pleasure. Go buy up fifty picture books, and ask permission to visit the juvenile ward, and leave one on each little cot. Buy a few dollars' worth of worsteds and fancy cottons and crochet hooks and feather braids and go through the convalescing ranks of the female patients of a hospital and brighten by your little presents the monotonous hours of your suffering sisters. It does seem to me that we struggle and put out lots of money and effort to attain the very miserable returns we call pleasure, when the truest form of it can be procured so cheaply.

A careful observation of the habits of man, as displayed at the windows and on the balconies of the hospital, leads me to believe that taking off a man's head is

the only way to take the flirt out of him. On the second story there is a ward apparently devoted to the use of young men who have been more or less removed. No one of 'em seems to have the full complement of arms and legs; but they all flirt. There's a pretty housemaid next door who rouses the whole hospital when she washes her steps. When she appears with her bucket they all appear with their crutches, and one particularly awful young man, who is swathed like a mummy and has evidently been half-way into a sausage-cutter, jumps playfully 'round and waves a red silk handkerchief at the divinity with the broom.

But, then, the ruling passion is hard to eradicate. I remember, when a lady friend of mine died a year ago, the doctor thought it his duty to break the impending change to her, and advise her to make such disposition of her property and two unruly children as she could in twenty-four hours, that being the limit of the game. She telegraphed for a sister, she sent for me, and she did all her front hair up on pins. When I reached her at nine o'clock, twelve out of her twenty-four hours were gone. She gave me the dreadful information and the most solemn charge to reach the house at twelve next day and "take down her crimps" before the undertaker saw her. It was plain she meant to make a good impression even on that most uninteresting of all men.

A SUICIDE.

Some of the greatest lessons the world has ever learned have been taught it by pictures, and I heartily wish I could duplicate one I saw the other day and hang it on the walls of every grinding, thieving manufacturer throughout the land. Every one who knows the habits of the Gusher knows that though she goes to bed with the owl she gets up with the lark. No sleep for her when there's daylight outside, and very little for anybody else in her volcanic vicinity. Well, it is nice to be up and out in the early morning, and especially in the country, where I am farming and browsing just at present. Astonished cows and newly risen roosters view me with surprise as I go prowling about over the land, and it was on one of these excursions that I saw the picture I wish I could have had photographed by the hundred for dissemination.

Just above McComb's Dam rotten bridge, the salt water of Harlem River is full of frozen cakes of ice. Along the shore it lies piled up in rough, dirty masses, and in the morning sun it glinted and gleamed here and there bright enough to put into cocktails, or gloomily bobbed up and down in the water as dirty and battered as property trunks. On some of these soiled and floating cakes of ice two men were picking their way, as Eliza crossed the river in "Uncle Tom," to an object jammed in between some of the overlapping layers. They bent curiously over it a moment, then lifted and

bore to the shore between them the body of a drowned woman—a mere shadow of a creature, with flat chest and narrow shoulders and bowed back, with hair just touched with gray, carefully combed and tied and braided on the hollow-templed head. Her eyes were wide, staring as if seeking to see what laid beyond the gate she had opened for herself, and a pitiful, pleading expression rested on the poor mouth, from which oozed the foam that always fills the lips of the drowned. Every article on the wasted body was scrupulously clean and carefully put on.

The rough but kindly men began to speculate on the probability of her being some resident of the neighborhood who had been out in the storm of the night before, and slipped off the bridge returning home. But Peter Conlon, the captain of the precinct, gave one look at the woman, and said : "She is a suicide, and driven to it by hard work and despair."

I wish that face in marble or on canvas could confront every ready-made clothing manufacturer in this land. I wish that silent but awful prophecy could reach everyone of the wretches who fatten on starving needle-women ; for just as surely as it told the tale of her misery past and her hard life ended, it told of the woe to come, the punishment waiting the authors of her misery, when, beyond this brutal ruling, that face would be in some celestial witness-box.

In a few hours the story of Minna Huer, the German sewing-woman who committed suicide, was known, and I shall never forget it, illustrated, as it was, with one dreadful picture. The papers gave it a brief, succinct mention. They are agitating—some of them—the question of better pay for the starving seamstress, but they failed to see the magnificent text furnished them by the life and death of this poor woman.

She was a good, pure woman, alone in a strange land ; a well-educated person of much refinement. She had lived for five years in a narrow garret all by herself, cooking her slender stock of food, polishing up her poor place till it shone with cleanliness, pulling a needle through a piece of cloth from five o'clock every morning till midnight, and often begrudging the time she lost in carrying her ill-paid work home, and breaking utterly down and seeking shelter in death when her hard work failed her.

When a young girl is suddenly faced by disgrace and rushes into the other world ; when a woman sees the light go out of heaven as some lover's arm drops from round her, and ends a life that contains no longer the love that sustained it, it's very sad ; but they both have had their good time, and the transition from joy to sorrow has wrecked 'em. Here was a joyless, sunless life, a round of unending toil, and it is very pitiful to picture this poor creature tidying up her attic for the last time ; putting all in order, knowing that she was never to return ; smoothing out the bed on which her weary limbs would never rest again ; dusting the little glass in which the wan face, going shortly to look into the gates of death, should never again be reflected ; writing her last sad letter to the brother at home, to whom she desired to send her few poor things ; thanking the good woman who had given her the teaspoonful of coffee with which she made her last earthly meal, and directing that in case her body should be cast upon the land once more it should be clothed in a nightgown she left in the top of the trunk, and which she had "long designed for that purpose."

My God ! Why was not some good Samaritan—some Vanderbilt or Gould—on that avenue seeking the poor

and needy, when, in the rain and growing darkness, the discouraged, despairing seamstress stole up its slippery length and plunged into the black, icy water? Where is the justice of Heaven that let that weary, grief-stricken spirit pass men whose pockets were bulging with coin made from the heart's blood of such poor creatures as she, and their mean legs not give way with paralysis or their grasping hands not wither with palsy?

Oh! Robert Ingersoll, I do hope you are a little out in your reckoning, and that there is another town, hard by, where some of the wronged citizens of this will find a hearing, and some of the tough citizens get a settling; for things are not conducted on a pleasing plan here.

AN ANATOMICAL DISCOVERY.

I WONDER if any *savant* of the past ever meddled with the theory that the reasoning faculties, the affections, the ambitions and instincts of man lie in the legs of that animal, not in the head? I do not desire to invade the realms of science nor occupy the pants of a professor. It would distress me beyond measure to see my name printed with Darwin and Tyndall. If I could go off and discover that this world was neither round nor flat, but built on the plan of a crook-neck squash by imitative Nature, I think I should refrain from mentioning it, to escape notoriety of a scientific character.

But it seems as if reasons of a philanthropic kind demanded that my present discovery should be divulged. I hesitate before flying in the face of accepted, long-standing belief. I know I shall meet, as all great discoverers have met, opposition and enmity. The person who upsets a theory that has enjoyed respect and consideration for ages treads dangerous ground, and it requires great courage and large-heartedness to become such an iconoclast. You can therefore take the dimensions of my courage and get a fair idea of the size of my pericardium by the step I boldly take in proclaiming that the legs of man, not the head, are the residence of his reasoning faculties, the abode of his ambitions, the boarding-house of his being.

With a woman it is different. She is anxious, she has a headache; she is miserable, she grows gray; she is flattered, her head swells. A man's head swells. That

proves nothing. It's the stuff he has put in his stomach that enlarges his head. You tell a man a funny story. What does he do? Slaps his legs. His risibilities are closely allied to his legs. You notice two men talking of taking a company on the road. The man with the money slowly rubs his legs between the knees and the hips; the man with the play, with every argument, stabs him gently in the thick part of his leg (unless the capitalist is a dude and has no thick part—then he just picks at the bone). Why do they both do this? Because the moneyed man feels that such prudence as he has lies in his legs, and the other feels that, if he can poke a full belief of his racket into the legs of the hunted animal, his show will stand a chance of going out.

Look at the prominence man instinctively accords his legs! A woman's dwell in comparative obscurity. A man's are always on exhibition. In public places they are constantly placed higher than his head. This is instinct. I am stopping just now at a country hotel, to which a garden is attached for restaurant and bar purposes. A party of men drift in. I make my bets while they are in motion. The man with the check legs will have his two legs on a table in five minutes. Out come the watches and we time him. Nine times out of ten I win. Drive up the Boulevards and look at the piazzas of the road houses—rows of boot and shoe soles are set up on the rails. The men are taking in the spectacle of our presence and the speed of fast horses with that portion of their body capable of most enjoyment—their legs. Look down the aisles of a theatre. Every man who has an end seat has his legs waving about in the passage. The little blower that is provided at the base of an orchestra chair to let air in on your spinal column is usually occupied by a boot-toe. The foot-rests are

enough for a woman, but a man is only prevented from putting his feet on top of the back of your seat by the presence of the usher.

I haven't been in a theatre for a year that some man didn't walk up my back like a fly or kneel like a camel in the desert on the small of my back. Why can't a man keep his feet on the ground as well as a woman? Because he's ambitious. His nervous centres, his projectile qualities, are in his blamed legs. The size of the legs is not regulated by the amount of ability their owner possesses in all cases. No one denies the cleverness of Evarts or the humanity of Bergh, and yet a Croton bug of ordinary intelligence wouldn't trust himself on four such legs.

It has long been allowed that the size of the head does not show the amount of intellect one possesses. A No. 23 hat is worn oftener for a season's success, the whiskey drank the night before, and hydrocephalus, than for intelligence or great perceptive faculties. This same state of affairs exists in the legs, but not so frequently. We all know that the attributes of the head are transmissible and contagious. The son has his father's red head and his mother's cross eye as an heirloom.

It was a wise provision that put women's brains in their bonnets. If women's affections dwelt in their legs, we should be horrified at their deportment. If a woman's ambition dwelt in her legs, we should be paralyzed by her having them higher than her head, and her No. 2 Spanish insteps stuck on mantel-pieces and balcony rails. Her sense of humor does not lie in her legs, or we should be shocked by the spectacle of woman slapping them every time she heard her husband had caught on to a new girl, or some little frequently recurring joke like that.

SUNDRY GRAVE SUBJECTS.

One of the wisest provisions of an all-wise Providence is that for the dead—there is no coming back. Foster and Slade to the contrary, the disembodied spirit does not revisit the scenes of earth. I should believe in future punishment if I were a Spiritualist, for a return to familiar scenes would be the worst sort of a hell to any loving soul.

Being more than ordinarily fond of a very bright woman, when my theological views were in a rather chaotic state, we used to discuss early death in a romantic fashion, and make terrible vows to each other as to our behavior beyond the grave. Why, we two promised many years ago that she who first laid down to final rest would break the bondage of the grave to know and soothe the sorrow in the other's breast.

And as time rolled on, it came about my dear old chum was called to meet the early death we had rather courted in our romantic days. God rest her! I really believe, could she come back as she promised, the only heart she had ever trusted that remembered her would be that of the Giddy Gusher. In three weeks from the day of her burial her husband wrote a love-letter to his wife's bosom friend. We all remember the loving soul in Paradise who importuned the heavenly gate-keeper for just one hour on earth in which to comfort the broken-hearted lover she had left kicking and pulling out his hair on her grave, and, though a thousand years

in Hades was the price, she paid it and jumped in on a scene to which the tortures awaiting her were as nothing, for a blond head lay on the shoulder where her brunette locks were wont to disport, and a big fat girl occupied the loving arms that had clung to her consumptive form. Smiles sat on the lips she had last beheld pale with grief. Altogether, it was the worst frost that had ever nipped her, and she flew for her thousand years, taking to the tortures very kindly after that return to earth.

It's a queer world, taken any way, and human affection is not an infringement of Goodyear's patent. I got several lessons to that effect quite early in life that I shall never forget. There came on a visit to my native town a gentleman and wife from a Western city, and the man was taken sick with some sort of fever, and after quite a lengthy illness, attended by the best doctor (who happened to be a good-looking bachelor), the poor husband died, and was laid out and coffined, and the funeral appointed and the mourners gathered. When the widow spoke of the family of the deceased and how bad they would feel, having no picture of their lost relative, some friends suggested a portrait by an eminent artist residing among them, and he was sent for in hot haste. This was before the days of Daguerre, when the fleeting daguerreotype and the flattering photograph were unknown, and a portrait after death was accomplished from a plaster cast taken from the face of the dead.

At that time no one was married, hung or buried without my active superintendence; naturally, then, I accompanied the artist to the home of mourning and carried the pail of plaster of Paris. We were ushered into the room where the body lay, and every one retired but our two selves. The artist twisted a towel round the han-

dles of the folding doors separating us from the disconsolate widow and her sorrowing friends to secure us from interruption, and commenced operations.

It was a hot summer day; the sharp, stinging cry of the locusts in the trees outside and the stamp of the impatient horse attached to the hearse were the only sounds that broke the stillness of the sad place. A towel was tucked neatly in round the dead man's nice white shroud, the rigid features were rapidly brushed over with sweet oil, and, to insure the reappearance of every wrinkle in the matrix, a spoonful of the heavy plaster was dashed with much violence into the hollow surrounding the right eye, and, as it was spatted down with the back of the wooden spoon, behold! we both saw the left eyelid twitch.

The artist, in great excitement, wiped off the plaster and tried another spoonful, and we got another wink. To come to Hecuba—for it's too long a story—the man was alive. I rushed for a doctor, silently and stealthily introduced him into our bureau of resuscitation, and in twenty minutes the body was looking about in a dazed way; and upon the artist devolved the task of breaking the news of the resurrection to the widow.

There was a crowd of mourners, relations and friends. The man, as men go, was an excellent husband, father and citizen, and a pleasant person to know. In that assembled company I saw consternation—the wildest surprise and astonishment, but there wasn't a syllable of rejoicing—and the entirely upset expression on the resigned widow's face I shall never forget. As I trotted home with the unused pail of plaster, the artist and I exchanged views.

"She didn't seem pleased a bit," said I, referring to the widow.

"No wonder. She's not only lost a funeral, but a wedding," answered the resurrectionist. "She has been engaged to the attendant physician for forty-eight hours, to my certain knowledge."

When you make your mind up to a certain thing and expect it, you feel sort of disappointed if it doesn't come off—even if it's a funeral, or your own leg. I remember when Mrs. Buskin took to her bed with mortal illness, she got poor old Sock up nine nights out of seven to hear her last words and see her depart in peace. Every time she sank most out of sight, and every time she rallied, and got some solid food about daylight. This thing went on for weeks till Sock got sick of it.

He was great friends with an undertaker in his neighborhood, and, in a general way, bespoke Mrs. B.'s coffin. So one day, after a specially bad night, he dropped in on the undertaker, and told him the old lady couldn't live through the day, and the man just sent the coffin home that afternoon. Sock set it up in the parlor, and dusted off the plate, and bought a wreath of immortelles, and laid it on the cover, and then brought in Samanthe to see the outfit. Instead of being pleased, she nearly raised the roof. She went on all day, but every one took a sleep that night, and we heard no more of the regular midnight leave-taking, and Samanthe Buskin goes out with one of the fall companies to play second old woman; and Sock is paying storage for a mahogany coffin with a tarnished plate setting forth how Samanthe died on August 11, 1869.

The story runs of another lingering case of suffering up in Connecticut, when an old lady watched beside a husband's deathbed for something like eighteen months. There was a ray of hope one day, and a relapse the next, till the patient wife was exhausted. The patient had

been very weak for several days together, when one morning the neighbors went in and found the widow quietly weeping.

"Poor darling!" she sobbed, "he breathed his last just as the clock struck four, and Miss Belcher's bantam began crowing."

"Did he seem to suffer much?" asked the minister's wife.

"Not close to the last," was the broken answer. "About three he had a bad spell of breathing, and I took his wind-pipe between my thumb and forefinger and pressed it kind of gently, and he went off as easy as a lamb."

BOTTLED EXTRACT OF SOUL.

THE Vienna police have of late been trying to suppress a certain doctor who has a theory that Soul is a sort of odor that exudes from a person, through the hair principally ; that this soul-perfume can be bottled, sold, and so used that the desirable attributes of some excellent character shall be carried into an unpleasant nature. I'm heartily sorry the meddling police have apparently cut short this beautiful business. How I should have gone into the bottled-soul trick had my worthy doctor ever touched New York !

I suppose some of the wild and untamed smells I meet are escaping souls, and I supposed it was gas till I read of my poor doctor's discovery. Whatever were his opportunities in Vienna, here in this city there is an unrivalled field for the bottled-soul business. How large a demand there would be for the Extract of Sullivan, or the Exhalation of Evarts ! Muscle and Erudition—a chance for the dudes to build up physically and mentally.

I took up a big black bottle at home, the other day, and my mother said : " Put it down, dear. It's an infusion of gall and wormwood, and extremely nasty to get on your hands."

" Is it ? " replied I. " Well, I ought to know about it, having had some of the chippiest instances of gall on my hands lately that I remember to have heard of."

To begin with, there's my friend Pump. Pump has a

fine house on Fifth Avenue and a country-seat in Pequonnock. Pump one day got a note from Gironemo Gall, saying that, as Pump's family was in the country, he'd like his bay-window for a party of five, to see the Grant funeral procession pass. Poor Pump had quite enough intimate friends to fill his house, but he is a man who has not learned that useful lesson—how to say no. Therefore, he wrote Gironemo that he could have a chance at the window, although he had a few friends of his own who were coming. Directly this got to Gall, that worthy sat down and wrote back that, having the window assured, he had invited seven more; his party would therefore number thirteen, and they, knowing how long the procession would be in passing, would bring some lunch.

Pump's hair rose on his bald head. Lunch eaten by thirteen in his magnificent parlors! What to do the poor man didn't know. He took counsel with a lady friend, who said the "only thing to do was to send him word to bring no lunch, as lunch would be provided."

According to this advice, poor Pump wrote, and ordered of Pursell an elaborate lunch for twenty-five persons, and with fear and trembling awaited the developments of the funeral morning.

At nine sharp, Gall and the first instalment arrived; a little later the party numbered thirteen, and then the undaunted Gall broke the news gently to his host that during the morning his wife's pastor and family, from Pequonnock, had come to this city, depending on him (Gall) to take them to some suitable spot to view the funeral.

"Of course, I could do no less than share my quarters with them," finished Gall, "so I invited them here."

Pump gasped. In due time the Rev. Mr. Sam Singer,

Mrs. Sam Singer, and four children under twelve, pulled the weary bell of the Pump mansion. Gall threw up an embankment of plush chairs and gilded tables on which to perch the evangelical kids. He disported himself with playful freedom, pulling out a Buhl cabinet and sitting on it in the rear of his guests, who were ranged in tiers in Pump's bay-window. At two, when the procession was under full head, lunch was announced. The hungry crowd descended upon the table laid in the library at the rear of the drawing-room, and nineteen out of the thirty-one would get their hands and mouths full, when one of the dozen left on guard would shout: "Oh! here's the Wethersfield Seedling Foot Guard!" and, paté-de-foie-gras, sandwich in hand, the Pequonnock detachment would madly rush across the Turkish rugs and pile into the window, shedding drops of bloated goose-liver in every direction, like sparks from a Catherine wheel.

A slight diversion was caused by little Sam Singer falling off the shelf of an *étagere*, where his doting parent had put him in company with a Dresden shepherdess. Sammy broke his head and the shepherdess both her legs.

My friend Pump has sent his rugs to the cleaners; and counts his outlay and inconvenience at something like a couple of hundred dollars. We exchange experiences and vote that the world has taken to a diet of wormwood and gall.

About three months ago a young man said to me: "You have the pen of a ready-writer, and I am not felicitous in expressing myself. I have met a girl in Elmira who is pretty high-toned, very well educated, and dreadful sweet on me."

It was a combination hard to understand, and while I pondered how three such conditions could exist together,

my fresh friend proposed that I should write his love-letters. You know how good-natured your Gusher is. I agreed, and the amatory correspondence began. That young woman has written three times a week, and I have done the same. The letters have glowed with fervid heat till I am sure the later ones have melted the wax on their backs.

Mr. Fresh seems to have become imbued with the opinion that this is purely my affair, and when I hand him his adorer's love-letters, I doubt if he reads them. Yesterday he called and wanted to know if I couldn't let her down easy—gradually cool off—and finally write her he was drowned or hanged, or some little thing like that. I hate to. In a great degree I am responsible for this very unpleasant state of things. She never saw this wretched sham of a lover but once, and the only atonement I can think of is to find some solid chunk of a real for true man, run him on deck as Mr. Fresh, agree to write all his letters when necessary, and abdicate.

Oh, you talk about gall! I could give you instances by the dozen.

A captain of one of the English boats had an unruly passenger in the steerage, who gave him no end of trouble. Finally he got drunk, fell down the companion-way, and broke his leg. The captain took up a collection, raising a hundred dollars, and gave him a rig of clothes besides. The first thing the man did when he got on shore was to begin a suit for damages against the company and one against the captain for malicious slander in saying he was as drunk as a beast from Liverpool to Sandy Hook

All this has nothing to do with the transmission of the qualities of souls and character discovered by the German doctor. I am not blind to my own deficiencies.

There are several qualities I lack. As an arithmeticker I am a failure. If only the bottling doctor were here, I'd take a case of Ferdinand Ward. His figuring is the style to suit me. I lack the quality of "holding" sadly. I should take half a case of Ed. Gilmore. He is able to hold five aces if occasion requires. I haven't the slightest confidence in the honor of English authors or composers, and I should try and get a few bottles of Stetson to repair that defect.

In the meantime New York is not so far behind Vienna. I went into a drug-store up-town the other day, for something to take off sun-burn, as fishing in open boats had rendered me a painful spectacle for first-nighters.

"What you want," said the man, "is our famous Pith."

I had never heard of it. He assured me it would give me an entirely new complexion and make a different creature of me. I like change, and I bought a jar as quick as a wink.

Going home, for want of better literature I unrolled a prospectus from around the jar, and here it is. I can understand how the doctor found customers for his bottled-soul business when I find that in intelligent New York such statements as the following find believers:

The Pith's peculiar effect is traceable to Polaric properties latent in the substance. It purifies the skin, neutralizes offensive perspiration, stimulates the capillaries to healthy action, smoothes wrinkles, rounds the form, removes tan, pimples and "worms," moistens the most torpid cuticle, and makes pliable the most rigid countenance; finally it exhilarates the mind, clears the mental faculties and allays nervousness.

The last three things were the ones to take my fancy —a sort of cold-cream that, daubed on my face, would clear my mental faculties and exaltate my mind was just the cold-cream for me; for, you must know, the manner

of using this article that acted on the mind, cheered the grummet, and pleased the penute was :

Previous to application wipe the face with a soft sponge moistened in warm water. Apply the Pith with both palms and work it well in for a few minutes by slow movement of the hands.

Determined to rid myself of any hitherto undiscovered "rigidity of countenance," I rushed home and undid my purchase. I found it looked like an ounce and smelled like twenty-four ounces of rancid butter. I read with horror that

Its fragrant aroma, which is new and different from any other known perfume, is permanent, it being part of the substance itself.

Thinks I, if I smell like this for any length of time, I may as well be buried at once, before friends forsake and fortune proves untrue.

This thought depressed me, and I got down to consider and wait for the "exhilaration of mind" promised in the prospectus, when I saw a rose-colored sheet of paper that had escaped from the jar unperceived. It was a simple and touching tale of the discovery of the shrub. I give it verbatim :

Rambling about in the mountain-passes for stray flowers, my attention was arrested by a most delicious aroma arising from the ground where I stood. The scene around me was wild and rugged, and not a flower to be seen. A strange feeling of loneliness crept over me, and my heart became agitated with feelings foreign to my nature. Recovering my self-possession, I stooped to trace the bewitching scent and found myself drawn as by magic to an ugly-looking shrub from which I mechanically broke a twig, and lo ! to my surprise, the pith of the twig emitted the exquisite fragrance which so enchanted me. Elated at this pleasing discovery I hastened home, but not until I had selected a few of the larger stems for specimens, and taken a good survey of the locality so I could find the place again. Making inquiries among the natives about the strange-looking plant, I observed an unwillingness on their part to give me

any satisfactory information ; one even went so far as to say it was poisonous and I had better let it alone. This excited my curiosity only the more, and by diligent search I found among the fortune-tellers, who abound in the city, one who for a round sum betrayed to me the secret.

This took place in the Indian end of Turkish Persia, I believe. Of course, after the secret was betrayed, the rancid butter was easily made, and here you have it, with all its pleasant idiocy printed and tied round it with pink ribbon. And lots of sensible people buy it and use it. Can you doubt the success of the Viennese doctor if he ever gets to New York and begins to peddle his bottled Extract of Soul?

THEATRICAL FARMERS AND SAILORS.

THE actor in the character of farmer or sailor is one of the most amusing persons on top of earth. The fad doesn't last long, but while it does it consumes all his strength and taxes all his vitality. The veriest cockney in the whole profession used to be George Clarke—you could not get him off Broadway. All the grass he wanted to see grew in Union Square. And when his managers wished to send him out, he sat down and wept as he packed his portmonkey for Philadelphia and Bridgeport, bemoaning the fate that exiled him from his beloved city haunts and conveyed him to fresh fields and pastures full of cows and vocal with frogs.

Look at him now! He comes in from a potato patch he hoes by the day, with hayseed in his hair—smelling of his cow—a horny-handed farmer. He will talk you blind on the exciting subject of rutabaga turnips, and his eyes dance with enthusiasm while discussing the three quarts of oats he's raising in pots on the back stoop. Observe the bagginess of his trousers at the knees—that's acquired through weeding onions; take in the slack he carries in the rear—that's brought on by sitting on a milking-stool.

I met him the other day with a long thing done up in brown paper, and thought by the cut of it it was a Persian yatagan, and that he was going to play some Eastern part. So I expressed myself, and was laughed to scorn. Catch him carrying any stupid "prop." through

the street. No, indeed; he was lugging a new scythe-blade, having mowed the old one all to flinders on a batch of stones where his hay is growing. Mrs. Clarke cut one crop with a pair of scissors, and George got in another crop with the family razor; but he found, after all, the proper thing for hay was a scythe, and so he'd bought a new one, and was hurrying home to snatch that little grass-plot bald-headed before the hens got in and snapped it up.

Then there's Johnny Wild; he's bought up all the land outside Troy, and throws an agricultural look about his clothes almost as strongly developed as that pervading George Clarke. Madame Ponisi's husband has a nice place back in Pennsylvania, where they raise snakes, and had a lovely crop last year.

Dear old Sam Wallace, he thought he would put up a larger and more commodious edifice on his place, and last spring he began all by himself to build. His home was almost ready for plasterers and painters, when one afternoon, while hanging a door, he heard a strange, creeping sound on the stairs. Looking over the railless opening, there he beheld a huge black snake squirming up, and just as the reptile's head appeared on the landing the plucky old gentleman gave it an awful knock with a chisel.

Even while this visitor was in the throes of death, he happened to look up and beheld hanging over one of the unplastered beams of the attic another of the same family. Nothing daunted, Sam seized a saw, and creeping up the next flight, he walked across the open beams and deliberately sawed the nasty beast in two. Then he thought for some time that he had two enemies instead of one—the sawed off tail seemed endowed with as much intelligence as the head part. It danced round and inves-

tigated its other end with a detached curiosity unpleasant to behold. The snake crop has rather daunted Madame. Sam got in his snakes early last year, but this summer they are going to seed uncut, as the dear couple are discouraged about raising anything else on their place.

But if the theatrical farmers are funny, the theatrical sailors are something convulsing. Wallack on board his yacht was a spectacle to stir their pulses to flights of emulation. Robson and Crane have got a yacht, Nat Goodwin's got a yacht, and Jack Ryley's got a yacht. He calls his the *Madeleine*, after his wife, but he should re-christen her the *Rock Hunter*. There never was such a craft for discovering rocks and splitting on them as the *Madeleine*. A dozen times she has been high and dry on them. You feel a bumping and a thumping under you as if the bottom of the boat were being filed off, and Jack says pleasantly, "She'll get over ; she's taking her rocks beautifully to-day."

I was on this theatrical craft the other day. Jack has carefully selected his crew from men who have had experience in nautical dramas. We all remember how good a *Captain* in the "Pinafore" troupe John Nash was ; he's the sailing-master. Ryley himself was a wonderful *Admiral* in the same piece, and his maritime intelligence lays over the deck. The *bo'sun*, first mate and loblolly boy is well up in sailors' hornpipes, and has played *William* so often that he is very seldom seasick.

Manned by such a crew, the *Madeleine* has created a wholesome terror in the souls of less experienced yachtsmen. I never saw such deference shown a small vessel. Quite a party boarded her the day I went—the prima donna of one company, the soubrette of another, a first old woman weighing two hundred pounds, a light come-

dian and the gallant Ryley. After adjusting his eye-glass, he gave the order to weigh the anchor, and the rest of us began to look 'round for the scales to make ourselves useful.

Twenty different sorts of boats were lying about near, and as they heard the mandate every one of 'em betrayed unusual interest. The light comedian thought he would distinguish himself, and he pulled cheerily on the first rope handy. Up went our jib, and for the next five minutes the recording angel had both hands full in noting down the profanity that filled the air on all sides. The *Madeleine* rounded and swept every deck in the neighborhood with her jib-boom. She backed and she filled. You should have seen the anchors fly out of the water! There was no safety for anybody but in flight—every one flew. "That's the way to be treated," said Ryley. "They give me the whole thing." The horizon was dotted with escaping boats, and away we went rock-hunting. Nash spread out a chart of Behring Straits and straddled over it in a knowing way, with a pair of dividers. We were just off the Larchmont Club House, but a true, safe sailor looks a long way ahead.

Rumors had reached me of Ryley's yachting on rocks as frequently as on water, so I was not unprepared when, in a good stiff breeze, I felt a sudden shock, and we came up all standing.

"It's Gibraltar this time," said the first mate, as he rushed below for a map of the coast of Ireland. We had a little cannon tied on to our gunwales, and Ryley ordered this fired. "It clears the air," he explained, and he thought we should lift with the smoke; and we did, going off with a parting scrape, as if loath to leave. "I think it would be a good idea to put the *Madeleine* on a dry dock," said the Commodore, "and

grease her bottom. She seems to stick lately whenever she strikes." This motion was carried unanimously. We all sang "Larboard Watch" and went below for seven bells. Afterward we sang "A Wet Sheet" and "A Life on the Ocean Wave," and Nash did very prettily a stave or two of "Merrily, Merrily Goes the Bark," and between all these selections we went below for seven bells.

The first old woman by this was a little ill, and we lashed her to a camp-chair and planted her aft, while we went below to the chart-room. Then the breeze died out and we were becalmed, so we got out the quadrant and took our bearings. For hours we drifted, "like painted ships upon a painted ocean." Well provisioned and provided with the means of having unlimited seven bells, our stalwart hearts never flinched. Of one thing we were solid certain, we had no water in our holds, and the jest ran on and the songs were sung, and lots of things were eaten, and—and then some anxious mortal looked at a watch. Great king! It was six o'clock, and the Commodore was due at the Casino at eight and the prima-donna due in her dressing-room at seven. The first old woman was out of an engagement, but she was sick of a nautical life, and elected to go in the boat that was to take the anxious Thespians to the distant shore, where six cornfields, a potato patch and an apple orchard took them to a depot. The party were nicely balanced in the dinky, and the heavy woman was besought to plant her feet in the exact centre of the boat, which she did, but some one's hand slipped. She sat down with an expression of anguish (used before for *Hamlet's* mother) on a rowlock, and the "sickening thud" was succeeded by a vision of two No. 6 boot-soles—common-sense heels—two yards of knitted leaf-lace and some tape-strings. A yell of hor-

ror greeted this spectacle, but the loblolly boy, quick as a wink, clapped an oar under her shoulders, and the light comedian, an expert swimmer, jumped in and buoyed her up. Ropes were attached to her head and heels, and we on deck began to pull. But, if she weighed two hundred pounds when she was dry, she weighed four hundred, water-soaked as she was.

The great head of our skipper here asserted itself. "Bail her out," said he. We were all willing to go bail if any one would take it for her, but no one offered—time was going on—Ryley must leave. "Tie her up to the after part of the boat; I'll send a derrick from off shore and some one to work it," said he. But just then help came from a yacht in the distance and the water-logged lady was taken on board with much boosting and more pulling. The little boat made for shore, a mile and a half away, and Captain Nash, in a nice baritone voice, sang "The Sea, the Open Sea," while the first heavy wrung out her skirts and threatened to founder us with the water she had brought on board.

By-and-by we had the twenty-sixth fright of the day. The returning boat was pulled by two able-bodied young female seamen, but they got in between two Glen Island boats and slopped about in such a hair-standing way that we were only anxious to recover their bodies. This agony was protracted for a long time, until, the Starin boom subsiding, we took the perilous passengers on board. Then we all sang "Blow, Ye Winds, I O," till the effort met a response. "We'll go into town in good shape," said the skipper, and we went below for eight bells. Sure enough, she was scudding when we came up. Nash examined the chart and found no danger signals marked for the vicinity of the Bermuda Islands (we were just off Glen Island, but what's sauce for the

goose is sauce for the gander, and we had no chart of Mr. Starin).

It was a jolly sail for the next twenty minutes, when, crash ! bang ! we were hoisted up on a beautiful steady rock, and we dipped to windward and bent to starboard and did all sorts of things to larboard but come off ! There we stuck. The captain went below and reported a hole as big as a barrel in her stern. "Take to the boat," said he heroically, "leave me to my fate." We were a couple of hundred yards off shore, and the captain swims, so we took his advice and the boat and sent a man to take him off the wreck, and after unheard-of trouble on land we got to New York and to Seighortner's for a nice supper, at which the Admiral returned thanks for the way in which we had carefully hung up the *Madeleine* in a nice dry place for the night. She has had some planks nailed over the hole we made, and to-day she is rock-hunting, as good as ever.

THE FORTUNE TELLERS.

THE Gusher got hold of a young woman the other day who was desirous of penetrating the veil of the future, and contemplated visting one of the advertising fortune-tellers of the city. The lady was in a great deal of trouble. The Alphonse of her existence had been mysterious and suspicious of late; there had been a terrible episode at a ball during the week before, and altogether the demon of jealousy was aroused. She announced to me her determination to "know the worst," and for this purpose visit a fortune-teller.

"Let's visit a half-dozen of 'em," said I; "don't do things by halves. We will wring from fate the whole dreadful boodle of woe. I'll chip in and pay for three of 'em; you do the same; and out of six seers it will go hard if we don't seer little into the nefarious proceedings of Alphonse."

And we started. The papers gave the address of ten different astrologers, clairvoyants and fortune-tellers. We selected six and took the one nearest home for the first pop.

In the basement of a decent house on the East side we were ushered into the presence of an ordinary man of middle age, dressed in a business suit—"an every-day young man"—the sort of person you would expect to find behind the counter of any dry-goods store. He took my anxious friend into a little room without a window, lighted by a student lamp; asked her the day and hour

of her birth; drew something on a sheet of paper that looked like a gridiron, with a rampant kitchen poker and a couchant kitchen tongs each side of it; held her trembling little hand and told her, "A dark man would work her mischief; she would be married within a year and lose her first children—twins—but afterward raise a large family; that great danger would overtake her; and only by consulting the best star-reading astrologers in the place where she happened to be, would she avoid a season of woe."

This, with the gridiron, was only fifty cents, and we were well pleased. On the next block we struck an oyster saloon with the legend "Families supplied" in the window; but on inquiring we learned that no such "large family" as our astrologer guaranteed would be supplied for fifty cents. Here we took a car up Third avenue to Thirty-something street to consult Madame ——. We were received by a gray-haired man, who conveyed us into the reception-room on the first floor of a flat-house. Madame —— proved to be an angular, slab-sided, sharp-eyed woman, who wrested her information of the future not only from the hand of fate, but your own hand. She was a palmist. Maria removed her glove and submitted her claw to the inquiring gaze of the Madame.

Now, then, our troubles began. The "line of life" had some very devious ramifications; the "Mount of Venus"—somewhere in the vicinity of the base of the thumb—exhibited a tendency to become volcanic; there was a terrible discovery made of disaster by sea in the neighborhood of the little finger, and a mysterious wrinkle near the centre of the hand predicted with unerring exactitude a red-headed husband of jealous temperament, and a cross-eyed boy, who would be drowned in

his twelfth year. Maria weakened, and I hastened to disgorge my dollar, which was Madame's fee, and we went off, per Xtown bob-tail, to the lair of Professor ——, in Sixth Avenue.

This was up one flight of stairs, and was something like a supernatural shop. A thick pair of green curtains shut out the light. A tremendous chart of the heavens hung on the wall. Astronomical apparatus stood on the table, and a white-bearded, bald-headed old man in a long dressing-gown of sombre purple asked us gently to be seated. Again the hour and day of birth were requested, and our reverend informant began with a pair of dividers and a compass to cast a horoscope. We learned that Mars was in collision with Taurus at the time of our birth (which, being translated, meant that our mothers were taking the bull by the horns). We were further disturbed by the announcement that Capricorn, whom we had always considered as friendly to us as old Capsicum, was inimical to our interests, and unless a conjunction with Cancer could be brought about, the next year would be disastrous. The contiguity of Ursa Major to Andromeda denoted a stump of a husband with a predilection for apoplexy, and four children, more or less unhealthy ; and the active interference of Saturn at an angle of forty-five degrees with our guiding star showed but too plainly that our maiden aunt Hannah would be removed by measles during the coming summer.

I supported Maria down the stairs, bearing the Nativity that cast such a shadow on our prospects under my left arm, and we turned our dejected footsteps toward Dr. ——, an unfailing medium for probing the future for the bullets of fate.

There was considerable cheerfulness about this gentleman's apartments. He had birds and musical instru-

ments hanging round, and a familiar-looking bit of drugget, and red table-cover and dried grasses in the place. The spiritual doctor turned out to be rotund and jolly, and redolent of beer freshly drunk, and we sat down to hike up spooks in the best possible trim. He asked me if I had ever consulted spirits before, and I told him I had enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with Charley Foster and his large collection of choice spirits —that when Jim Collier kept the "Histery," corner of Broadway and Thirteenth Street, I was qualified to give rectified opinions on the subject, and that my relations with Shed Shook settled the matter. I knew as much about spirits as a distillery, and so the seance began. We wrote the names of dead friends on slips of paper.

Maria's Aunt Hepzibah came up with remarkable viciousness. She said she "was watching over to direct and indirect her, but want of faith kept the conditions unfavorable. The coming year was to be one of powerful disaster. A faithless husband, two children with the rickets, inflammatory rheumatism and a bad fall would all come to her in that year." I thought this was tough, for a spring, summer, hard winter, and a bad fall to drop into one year broke her quite up.

The procession formed again, and we took up the line of March for Mrs. ——, who was infallible, and dwelt on Forty-first Street. This critter was cadaverous and gray, and looked like Cushman made up for *Merriles*—and, indeed, an evident attempt at a supernatural get-up had been made; her bony hands had been lined with Indian-ink till they were ghastly; a hollow circle of purplish ink surrounded her eyes; her dress was of black cotton velvet, and a mass of coarse black lace fell round her head and shoulders. She sat down in front of Maria, and when Maria from force of habit was about to say she was

born at four o'clock, Sunday morning, in the year ——, the prophetess shut her lips by saying: "I know all your past as well as your future."

This made me very comfortable. I thought, "Well, we've struck the right old cat at last; but she shall keep her attention on Maria." Just here Mrs. —— took Maria's hand, shut her own eyes and began to have fits. The spasms were wicked to see, and Maria, being weakly, got scared; but I reached for a water pitcher and remarked, "This woman must be brought to by immediate and copious inundation—the Croton is rising." So was the prophetess, as the first drop struck her. "Put down that pitcher," said she. "I am going into a trance." And she did—but with one eye half opened and keeping a bright lookout for me.

After a space of silence she began murmuring indistinctly, and suddenly gaining her power of spirit, she cried: "Oh, Heaven! what a condition this poor woman is in; the left lung is infested with tubercles; the right ventricle is much impeded; this is a sure case of heart disease; the aorta does not act normally; your stommick is impaired; the coats of the stommick fails in some respects." Being a female stomach, I asked if the coats were not in this case petticoats; but was instantly repressed.

"The pleura doesn't suit me," continued the doctress; "symptoms of inflammation is visible in the pericardium." (We were getting at the trouble with Alphonse now.) "A species of congestion has took place in this locality." Just here Maria's diaphragm stopped her, but her scientific insight trampled over that obstacle, and with a shriek of alarm she brought up at poor Maria's liver. "Mercy! mercy! how do you get round and manage to live? here's such torpidity as I never

see." Now, then, I interfered. "We came here to get information of the future, not to have a medical examination," I said.

"But this woman hain't got no future with things carrying on this way inside her," exclaimed my trance-parent fraud. Maria by this time began to feel very unwell, and the doctress continued her explorations. I sought to break off this unpleasant thread of investigation by asking questions.

"How do you know the lady's liver is torpid!" I inquired.

"I can see the torpids," said the doctress; "and unless she takes my medicine for liver complaint she won't live a year."

I grabbed Maria and made for the door. Madame came out of her trance in a hurry. "You haven't paid me for my examination yet," said she.

"And that ain't the worst of it," said I. We gained the street without further interference. Now, then, for the wonderful gifted seventh daughter, born with a gall.

It was growing late of a murky afternoon as we toiled up the steps to the den of the gifted one. She, like her predecessor, was given to time-compelling tricks. A dark gown on which cabalistic characters were sewn of white cotton adorned her rotund figure. She took a greasy pack of cards, her kit of tools for picking the lock of the gate of futurity, and commenced operations. Maria was to lose her husband in the summer, but marry again next fall; have six children; meet with a money loss; a dark man was coming to the house; there was to be a speedy removal, a letter to her bed from across sea, and general faint-heartedness. In this glad way we were making history very fast, when it occurred to me I had seen fortune-tellers before. I studied her

grimy old features till they came back to me, and then I concluded to go into the fortune-telling business myself.

"Why, see here," said I, "let me read the cards: You engaged for second old woman with George Howard for a season at the Adelphi Theatre, Troy, about twenty years ago. You were to join the company at Green's Opera House in Albany, and play in a version of 'Ida May.' You came up to the back door at the last minute on the night of the company's first performance there, and told a frightful story of present necessity that got a few dollars out of the management to go get your baggage off the boat. You came back in half an hour so comfortably full you could just walk. You managed to escape the eagle eye of the boss, and got on the stage. You wandered on in a scene where you had no business, sat down on a garden bank, fell off it speechless, and ended your engagement in just twenty minutes after you entered on its duties. So, having disclosed your past, we wish you a good afternoon," and gave our two dollars, and lugged my friend out.

But Maria isn't satisfied. She says she didn't get any information because I was along. Next time she's going to tackle fate without me.

UNFORGOTTEN "PAULINES."

SOMETHING brought "The Lady of Lyons" to the front this morning, and your Gusher began to think over the *Paulines* of her acquaintance. They have been many, various, of all conditions and sizes. The youngest was little Julia Wyatt; the oldest, an ancient dame who was stage-struck during the last century, and brought herself out as *Pauline* when she was in the fifties; the prettiest was Sallie St. Clair; the fiercest was Mrs. Waller; the fattest was Carlotta LeClercq, and the funniest was poor Annie Seuter.

George Wyatt, the eccentric manager who rode the circuit of the Eastern towns many years ago, had two adopted daughters, at that time nine and ten years old—Julia and Helen. He drilled these children in *Romeo* and *Juliet*, *Pauline* and *Claude*, and *Camille* and *Armand*, and, with the rest of the cast full size, did those astonished plays, "Lady of Lyons," "Camille," and "The Loves of the Capulets." It was a lively series of performances. The Connecticutters took 'em in good part—saw no incongruity in the idea; but the little Gusher just howled and had lots of fun by herself. Poor John Flood would be the *Beauseant;* old Beader Pratt, as big as John Gilbert, did *Monsieur Deschapelles;* Wyatt himself, weighing two hundred and fifty, the size of John Duffy, played *Damas;* Mrs. Wyatt, an Irishwoman with a brogue like Castle Garden, did the *Widow;* and Julia, aged nine, and small for her age, whisked around with a

train the size of a kitchen apron, denouncing the villain *Beauseant*, who stooped over her in order to hear that his base proposals were properly refused. Then Helen, as the *Prince*, two sizes larger than her sister, would enter on the scene, and George Wyatt would almost go on all-fours to fight the combat with his three-foot adversary.

Then there was the heavy-weight *Pauline*. At some benefit, where slices of most everything went into the bill, McCullough did *Claude* and Carlotta LeClercq did the *Lady of Lyons*. One act—that was all ; but it was enough. The cottage act, I think it was, and Carlotta, in an extremely low-necked dress, filled me with apprehension. At that time she was very fat—whatever she is now—and she looked for all the world as if she were built of calves-foot jelly. She shook and surged and billowed about, and I thought, "Great Heavens! if she should slop over?" And she came precious near it so often that the danger was excitingly disagreeable. She threw up her arms in her distress, and the pink meat gurgled around the bones. Oh! a succulent and juicy *Pauline* was Carlotta, and John danced around her as if he was almost pleased at his repulse, and wouldn't have known what to do with her had she viewed him more favorably. The stairs crackled as the *Widow* led her off to the attic room, and I never saw a scareder man than John when she seemed to relent with an awful creak on the fourth stair, nor greater relief on the human countenance than on his when she finally disappeared.

For a good, determined old pump of a *Pauline*, with whom no *Claude* would play tricks, commend me to Mrs. Waller. I struck her up in Troy, some few years ago, doing "The Hunchback" and "The Lady of Lyons." She took it out of *Julia* with a fierceness that boded no good to *Clifford* when she said, "I vow I'm twenty."

The truth-loving editor of the *Budget* groaned. And when she cried, "Clifford, why don't you speak to me?" a boy upstairs sung out, "Because he's paralyzed!" You know how one gets fascinated by the terrible, and I went next night to see *Pauline*, and I never shall forget it. She was as frigid as the North Pole. I could have gone skating all round her. She chilled our young blood; but she had deeper depths of horror, and behold! the third night I took in "The Duchess of Malfi," and here occurred an accident that, before dissecting any more *Paulines*, I must tell you.

You remember that cheerful, dramatized night-mare, "The Duchess?" In the last act, murder, arson, treachery, and treason have done their bloody work. *Mrs. Malfi* is in a fourth-proof mad-house—clean daft—she weeps and wails, she shrieks with demoniac laughter, she sees things—she crouches, she prowls, she cavorts about the stage apostrophizing air-drawn children and deceased grandparents, while all the time from under the stage came the fitful wails of incarcerated companions in madness. To accomplish the "cries outside" properly, the spare members of the company sat in the green-room, jolly as sand-boys; the prompter bored a hole by his desk and dropped a string down into the green-room through it; old Daddy Herbert, underneath, sat on a high stool, with the tape in his hand. When a howl was needed, Pop Steel, prompter, pulled his string, and the company below stopped conversation and emitted heart-broken cries of various natures. This was great fun, and for the last act the Gusher went round behind to lend a merry little howl to the band.

It happened on this particular night that after one series of groans, when the action of the play demanded a rest, Lane, the property man, caught a cracking big rat,

and all the company, including Daddy Herbert, forsook the green-room to look at it. I was poring over a book of the play, when I saw the tape-string wiggling like mad in a wild search for the wails of the demented. Now, the Gusher has lungs of immense capacity, but she longs for innovations; so, instead of raising her dulcet voice in a double-barrelled yell, she grabbed one of those twisted brass instruments, called a trombone, that a member of the company had left behind when he joined the rat-hunt. She bent her energy to the getting out of it all the wickedness that lies in a trombone.

My senses, what a row! Prolonged toots, like an express coming round a curve; young shrieks that, full-grown, would have crowded ear infirmaries; a variety of notes that only a steam calliope could rival. "In love and pleased with ruin," fascinated by the dread instrument, still blew I on. What mattered if the string long since had ceased to vibrate! What mattered if Mrs. Waller was at white-heat upstairs and the audience in roars of laughter! I was playing the trombone to the queen's taste, and until David Waller, Harry Hotto, and Maurice Pike wrested the instrument from my grasp, I just warmed up "the Duchess of Malfi," and made things very funny for everybody—but myself; I caught it.

I was going to tell you of a very droll performance of *Pauline* that happened at this same Adelphi Theatre. The star was a pretty little woman; but it turned out she hadn't made much of "a head," as they say in Dublin. We went from Troy down to Albany to visit the Western girls during the day, and, to fortify us against a sleigh-ride back to Troy, Lucille compounded some seductive hot stuff of whisky, eggs, milk and brandy. I never knew eggs and milk to behave so in a custard, but in this instance they raised the mischief. The nearer we

got to Troy the worse *Pauline* became ; but she pulled herself together and got through fairly till the time she enters and is told by her parents the *Prince* must leave them. Here *Pauline* lost her bearings. She gravely turned to the old folks and began Desdemona's speech :

> I do perceive here a divided duty.
> To you I am bound by birth and education.
> My birth and education both do teach me
> How to respect you ; but here's my husband, etc.

Charley Salisbury was doing the Dad ; he promptly went on :

> My life has fallen into the sere and yellow leaf,
> And that which should accompany old age,
> Love, obedience, honor, troops of friends,
> I have not ; but in their place, curses, not loud, but deep,
> And one fair daughter tighter that a peep.

It was lovely !

SOME PUBLIC NUISANCES.

I've made up my mind to go to my friend, the photographer, and get a second-hand screw—one of those cast-iron, vice-like contrivances that imprison the human skull while the camera does its fatal work. I will cart this to theatres with me, and impale the cocoanut in front of me on its tines like a doughnut on a fork. You see I am desperate, and if you meet me in the lobby lugging something that looks like the original old cross-bow gun Edward introduced at the battle of Cressy, don't be afraid; it's not ammunition—it's my apparatus for seeing the show.

At a first night lately, I sat behind a big woman who always accompanies an old musical critic to the theatres. She wears on her devoted head a regular old-timer waterfall; the hair of half a dozen women is piled up the back, sides and top. On this hirsute construction she throws out little hair corns and wens. I suppose she would term them puffs. And then she clasps on an Alpine hat with the spoils of a herd of ostriches waving above. This cheerful woman betrays symptoms of palsy, St. Vitus' dance and epilepsy. That blessed head of hers bobs and wiggles and shakes like the topknot of a Chinese mandarin.

I sat the other night in blissful ignorance of the stage, till it struck me I'd like to see somebody on it. I scrooched and peeked under the right ear-ring of this theatrical abomination. In an instant that loophole was

lost and the head ducked to the right. Here was my chance. I flew for the opening at the left. Old fuss-and-feathers was back as quick as I. This operation was repeated twenty times a minute. So I gave up further attempt to see the performance and watched the waving head, now up, now down; now right and left. Oh, Jacob's Oil! how I did wish she might have a stiff neck for about half an hour.

Next to the girl with the dreadful big hat and the old hen with the hair embankment, comes the ruffian who rolls up his coat and sits on it. It's a sure sign he's in an impecunious condition and is wearing old clothes. No man ruthlessly rolls a valuable garment and drops on it as if he were a pile-driver. And if the coat is a good one, then he's an unbroken countryman fixed up to "go to York." He has a wild idea that some one will steal that new overcoat unless he has it under him, or he has been used to the soft side of a wooden bench, and got into the habit of tempering the tough board to the tender pantaloons by making a sandwich of himself, his coat and a section of hickory (man-like, getting the meat in the wrong place).

An inspiring spectacle used to be a procession of Peter Cooper (the ex-mayor) and the air-pillow. Sometimes Peter went, already blown up, with the air-pillow on his arm; sometimes the ex-mayor bore it under his coat, folded up. It was one of the old-fashioned kind—built like a life-preserver, round, with a hole in the middle. They didn't go to theatres often, if ever; but the Gusher was in for all sorts of wild excitement, and therefore took in Geographical Society meetings and ratifications and debates. So in the bowels of the earth, over the corner of Eighth street and Third avenue, she often came upon the blowing up of Peter when he came with

his cushion in a collapsed state. But Peter was a philanthropist, and I honestly believe, in his tripe-like old pericardium, there was as much good-will to man as is found in the human heart. If he thought he was obstructing any fellow-creature's view of Chief-Justice Daly's geographical legs, he would blow off his cushion as quick as a wink. Heaven bless him !

Not so the hair-raising woman or the coat-roosting man. They are as careless of the feelings of others as they are careful of their own, but the hour of retribution draws nigh. I'm going to get the head-screw, and I'm equal to applying it red hot, as I did the plaster to Charlotte Cushman's back. I never told you about that, did I? Well, I must, for it's funny.

Charlotte was stopping in the same hotel with me once, many years ago. She had a faithful colored maid and a Scotch terrier as travelling companions. Lottie was not extravagant ; so, dispensing with a carriage the first night of her engagement, the dog, the maid, and the tragedienne set off to find the back door of the theatre. It was not more than three blocks away ; but in a blinding blizzard of a storm, it took her some three-quarters of an hour to reach it by going quite out of town and coming in by a cross-lot cowpath. She took a fearful cold, and after delighting the youthful Gusher with her marvellous *Meg Merriles*, won her heart completely by asking her to share her supper. It was during this supper that the subject of a plaster was broached. The cherished dog was taken wheezy, and the maid began rubbing its throat with camphorated oil. Charlotte produced a lovely kid plaster, thickly spread with a black mixture like tar.

" Now, warm that well," she said, " and put it just between my shoulders."

My acquaintance with Burgundy pitch in plasters was limited. I held the blamed thing to a roaring grate fire, while Miss Cushman let down the neck of her dress. When the plaster began to melt in the fervid heat, and my fingers were well scorched, I clapped it on the unfortunate actress's back, and a howl went up to heaven that shook the roof.

"Take it off!" she shrieked. It wouldn't come off, and it didn't come off; it stopped where it was and sizzled, and we had doctors and all sorts of curatives for burns, and I was in disgrace (as usual). This digression has little to do with the subject, only to show how likely I am to give folks things red-hot when my sympathy is aroused.

A PRISON INCIDENT.

I WAS reminded, when passing Meriden recently, of an event happening many years ago, by the boarding of the cars by a mean, contemptible-looking man I had thought dead years ago. This man's name is Doolittle, and he used to be keeper in the Wethersfield State-prison. He bears on his face some awful scars.

I think the time is not far distant when the festive Connecticutter will begin to believe that, if he would have "his days long in the land," he must not, when appointed State-prison warden, act as though the spirit of Danton and Robespierre had possession of his Yankee body. That small but severe State began a swindling warfare on man and beast many years ago, when a peck of hickory nutmegs, "biled" in a pot, with one original Jacobs, did well enough for flavoring the unimpassioned doughnut of that innocent period, and when shoe-pegs sharpened at both ends passed for oats with the unenlightened horse.

But time has changed all that. The blue laws and the wooden nutmegs have passed away, and the only vestige of the ignorance, the superstition, and the barbarity of those early days exists in a small town six miles from the capital, Hartford.

This town smells strong in the nose of high Heaven for many and various offences. In the first place, Wethersfield is one vast onion-bed. Every woman and child in it has corns on his or her knees from kneeling at

the eternal task of weeding. Tears fill the eyes of the stranger within its gates when first the affecting effluvia bursts upon his nose. It is an old town, a pretty town, with old, old houses and magnificent elms, and the pleasant bit of the Connecticut River known as Wethersfield Cove, hid away among green fields and waving onions. But of a sudden a turn in the elm-embowered road brings you face to face with a huge blue-stone mass of buildings, whose grated windows and forbidding aspect plainly tell you you are fronting the Wethersfield inquisition—the Connecticut State-prison.

Prisons were not built for rewards of merit. It is not supposed their inmates are happy or expect to be. But as there is a merciful God above, to whom the best of us pray for mercy, never for justice, so should the guilty (and sometimes the unfortunate and not the guilty) find the justice meted to them by imperfect man tempered with that attribute of divinity. If ever there has been inhumanity shown to poor fallen humanity, it has been within those dark-blue walls. I question if ever the dungeon that echoed to the groans of the tortured Ugolino, or the unhappy Leonardo da Vinci, heard more of man's misery than the Connecticut State-prison. Warden after warden has fallen before the maddened victims of their tyranny, till it really seems as if the law of self-preservation would in some way control the Connecticutters' wild desire to oppress and destroy. And so I am prompted to tell you the story of Doolittle and the way his face came to be seamed.

A good many years ago a young Irishman came to this country and opened a modest little liquor and cigar-shop in the city of New Haven. The building occupied by Gerald Toole for this purpose was a frame dwelling-house, further inhabited by several families. One night

this building burned, and Toole, being insured fully, was accused by his landlord of incendiarism, tried, found guilty by twelve bullheads on evidence of a very weak character, and sentenced by some judicial lightning-bug to imprisonment for life. A mere boy of twenty, he was consigned broken-hearted to the tender mercies of the Wethersfield prison. He had never made a shoe in his life, and for that reason probably the astute authorities put the poor devil in the shoe-shop. He meekly, humbly went to work to do his best. In a few weeks he got so well up in his part of the business that the overseer in charge told him he *must* do this particular branch of work on an entire case (12 pairs) of shoes each day or take a flogging. Day after day saw that poor young wretch working with all his might only to accomplish nine or ten pairs, to be flogged with leather thongs in the hands of a huge blackamoor ; to have his raw and bloody back washed down by a bucket of salt and water ; his shirt put on and his maimed, mangled carcass thrust into a cell, where sleep and misery refused to lie down together. Day with its blessed sun followed these nights of horror, till finally the man Toole was turned into a fiend, who looked upon any means of escape as justifiable.

There came a day when, working desperately at his bench all the hours allotted to him, night overtook him with only the eleventh pair completed. He was as usual taken to the stone-room, where the negro and the whip awaited him. This time the forlorn, abused wretch had made up his mind that if he must die he would sell his life dearly. As the inhuman overseer, Doolittle, with his assistant, began stripping the victim, the warden entered the room, and, falling on his knees, poor Toole begged him to interfere, pleaded with him as if for life, assured him that another day, he thought, he would be able to

get through his case of boots—he had done his best that day. But his prayer was of no avail; the warden told them to go ahead with the flogging.

The shirt was torn from his raw back, and the lash of the negro descended. In a moment, however, the scene was changed. Instead of tremblingly receiving the cruel lash, the victim suddenly turned upon his tormentors with a small shoe-knife he had concealed in his waist-band, and, making an onslaught on the entire party, cut and slashed right and left among them. The fiend Doolittle and the brute negro each got gash after gash, and as the warden came within reach of the infuriated man, he got a rip from the flying knife that loosened his unnatural bowels for the rest of his natural life. Grabbing his injured crop with both hands he made for his office, sat down, and in less than a brace of shakes gave up his little ghost.

After the warden left the flogging party, there was a reinforcement. Toole was overpowered, kicked, beaten, dragged and left in a dark cell for dead. However, the warden was a gone man, and as a natural consequence Toole would be wanted on a charge of murder. So to the cell they went, got the half-dead creature out, and went to work fixing up their case to make a presentable show in the Hartford courts. This miserable man was tried, convicted, and hanged, all in due time, and *three years thereafter* there died in New Haven the owner of the house poor O'Toole was sentenced for burning, and this landlord on his death-bed confessed to the priest that he was the real culprit. The good father would not, and did not, grant him absolution until that confession was made to the world and not to the church.

Law has got into such a muddle in this country, and "put-up jobs" so often act instead of even-handed justice, that, going through our own prisons, I am not sure

whether I am viewing the real worth and virtue of the State put out of the way of interfering with criminals by those who manage the bar and bench. Certainly the annals of the Connecticut State-prison show some of the keepers and wardens to be harder and wickeder than the criminals under their charge.

YE CHEWERS OF GUM.

LET any one advertise having discovered some emollient for smoothing the human countenance—some unguent that, applied to the face, will compose and beautify its expression, and he will find ninety-nine women out of a hundred anxious to try it. And yet it does seem as if every other woman was making a fright of herself chewing gum. Wherever you go, in stores, in cars, in church and theatre, abroad and at home, it's chew, chew, chew!

The masticating operation is not a lovely one. Byron couldn't bear to see a pretty woman feed, and counselled the professional beauty of his time to chew her food in the privacy of her apartment, and tackle the table with her own grocery well stocked, that she might dally with a fork and trifle with a spoon, and spare admirers the pain of seeing her jaws in the spasms of mastication.

Good Lord! What would he do now in these days of tutti-frutti and spruce gum? Chew—chew—chew; wiggle and woggle their unceasing jaws; turn over the unending cud with restless tongue. Chew, chew, chew! On the faces, upheaving with this exciting engagement, there is an accompanying expression of idiotic interest in the absorbing business on hand—a sort of chewing-gum abstraction.

I looked at a line of women in a Broadway car lately. By the door was a large, fat woman who had studied the panel adorned with an advertisement of chewing-

gum. There was a ponderous, surcharged air upon her stolid face, as if the announcement she was reading was taking effect. I glanced at the next woman—a girl with frail figure and luminous eyes, æsthetically dressed, innocent and demure. She suddenly projected her chin, made a circuit in space with her under jaw, turned over her cud with a wallop of her tongue, and started in as if dear life depended upon her getting seventy-five incisions to the minute into that gum.

I turned in horror to the next human face. It was that of a colored girl, with a "basket of wash" on her lap. Her eyes were rolled up in a state of beatitude till nothing but the whites of 'em showed. She was having an attack of short, sharp, decisive chews that gave little regular jerks to the top of the head.

Two young women sat next along the line.

"Ya-ump! ya-ump! Was Henry at your—ya-ump—house, last night?—ya-ump, ya-ump!" asked one.

"Ah-ung! ah-ung! You bet—ah-ung! Catch him staying away—ah-ung! ah-ung!" chewed the other, and then they sat and looked me over and did "ya-ump" and "ah-ung" in unison.

Further along a lady held the Amelie Rives number of *Lippincott's* before her face in that intense way that women accord to that issue. But outside the page there was a rapidly bulging and contracting cheek, and a now-you-see-it-and-now-you-don't play of eyebrow, which indicated that the deadly work of gum-chewing was going on in the very rockiest spot along Miss Rives's lines. Passionate passages and tutti-frutti spasms were taking it out of that woman's frontispiece together.

So I reverted with relief to the cataleptic countenance of the fat lady by the door. Great Scott! The imperturbable calm was all broken up; the torpid cud was

revolving like a button on a woodshed door. The mass of meat that composed her cheeks was writhing and contorting as I have seen the hapless child across its mother's knee. She was out-chewing the chewers, and I felt my way to the platform with my eyes shut on the dread spectacle of a half-dozen women all in a row chewing gum.

Girls, young women, and old women, for heaven's sake sit down before a looking-glass and take a look at yourselves chewing gum! The practice makes you look ridiculous. It distorts your faces. It cheapens your style. It endows your mug with the expression of an idiot. I defy a girl, however pretty, to look well chewing gum, and its work is fatal on the female face surviving the first freshness of youth. It brings up the muscles of the neck like whip-cords; it stretches the flabby skin of the cheeks by one movement, and shows up the wrinkles by the next.

For the sake of your looks, stick your cud of gum on your mirror as you pin your hat on, and spare the public eye the painful exhibition of a woman in the pangs of gum-chewing.

THE SAD STORY OF CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

Did I ever tell you of Charlotte Elizabeth? Lottie Libbie was a rag doll of mammoth proportions belonging to the Gusher at the tender age of five. On one hospitable afternoon a few infant friends gathered, and it was proposed to give Charlotte one square meal. A hole was dug in her mouth and about a pound of cotton dragged up. The vacuum thus formed was filled with clam fritters, fricasseed chicken, and any other eatable thing we could lay our hands on. This meal was administered with a spoon and rammed down with the handle.

Now, Charlotte's digestive faculties were not equal to her appetite. She suffered dreadfully with dyspepsia for three days, and then the family began to suffer. They tore up the floor for dead rats; they sent for the Selectmen to look into the drainage; they disinfected and they deodorized with every means known in that unenlightened age and benighted city.

Suddenly it began to be noticed that the awful perfume stole over their agonized senses with strange regularity on my appearance. The Investigating Committee immediately turned their forces on me. I was triumphantly acquitted. But, alas! Charlotte was discovered. The dreadful creature was taken with the kitchen tongs at arm's length, and I was retired for fumigating. It is distinctly remembered that my remonstrances were heard at Rocky Hill, a distance of six miles, and my lament

for Charlotte Elizabeth clouded the domestic circle for weeks.

It was the third Sunday after "the deep damnation of her taking off" that every one but the darkey cook and the early Gusher went away to church, and the cook divulged the dreadful secret.

"They done gone bury Chart 'Lisbeth under the p'ar-tree," said she.

With a wild shout and a fire-shovel I started for the pear-tree, and the resurrection of my pet was effected in short order. There had been heavy rains and blistering suns. The coffinless body was a thousand times more hideous than before burial; but I hugged my poor darling to my faithful breast, and burst forth in a vow of earnest and dire vengeance.

I knew the length of Parson Chauncey's sermons. My wrath was not to be nursed that long. Too mad to think of a bonnet or ceremony, with Charlotte under my arm, I bolted into church and up the aisle to the family pew in front of the chancel. The pews were high and my head was low. The worshippers were conscious of an undercurrent odor no way resembling Jockey Club. Remarks were passed that the drain had burst. Then, arriving at my family's headquarters, I rattled on the buttoned door, and, to show my triumph, stuck Charlotte's face—Charlotte's horrible, grave-stricken face—with the ghastly hole through which she had taken her first, last, fatal meal, yawning frightfully at my paralyzed mother —up over the top of the pew.

There was in the pew a fashionable young aunt, who fainted in the corner; there was a sympathetic little brother, who yelled out, "Where did yer find her?" and there was a stern and dignified theological uncle, who always said, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." As if

to receive the benediction or sing the doxology, this entire party rose. Charlotte and I headed the procession out of church, and I drop a curtain over the troublous interval that ensued.

Every heart knoweth its own bitterness. I do not intrude my private griefs on the public, but it was the moral lesson that followed this episode, and that was read to me by the Rev. Mr. Chauncey, that I think applies to monstrosities besides Charlotte Elizabeth. The good pastor pursued me to my home and found me a little outlawed pirate, sitting on a hen-house near the "p'ar-tree," breaking my heart over a feeble bonfire, on which lay the smouldering rags of what was once my darling and my pride. My Christian uncle had built the funeral pyre, and with an umbrella warded off my rescuing attack with the clothes-poles. He was then court-plastering his head with family aid, and I, by common consent, was banished, when dear old Mr. Chauncey took me in hand.

"My darling," he said, "in this world we must consult other people's feelings. That which we like may be very unpleasant to those around us. Always before doing anything, think 'Will this be agreeable to others?' There were disagreeable features connected with our lost Charlotte that you failed to perceive. Her presence was not altogether desirable, and never force upon an assemblage so unpleasant a creation as Charlotte just because you love her yourself. You crowded her with good things to no purpose, and you have made many worthy people miserable by dragging her before the public."

MRS. PRATT'S EQUESTRIAN EXPLOIT.

One summer afternoon Mrs. Doctor Pratt undertook to ride the doctor's horse. She was a short woman, weighing about two hundred pounds, apothecary weight, and the horse was one that John Nathan, the circus man, sold to her husband and used to ride in the entry.

Mrs. Pratt had a chair brought out and mounted with much dignity and cheerfulness. She had heard that it was unfashionable to wear any skirt but the habit-skirt; but she had not heard that a pair of man's pants was inevitably worn underneath. But just with her ordinary summer pants on she rode away.

At the corner of the principal street—just when all the bank men stood on the bank steps, and all the sports stood on the hotel steps, and all the women walked by to be looked at—a hand-organ struck up, "Oh, give me back my Arab steed."

The Arab steed pricked up its ears and set up its tail. It remembered the old tune, and round and round in narrowing circles it went—cross one—sharp turn, in and out. Imagination peopled the street with spangled banners and Mrs. Pratt became a circus for that deluded horse!

The woman lost her head—that was the first thing she lost—the spectators were unable to lend a hand, as they were holding their sides. Round and round went the nag. Mrs. P. concluded to slip off. Just as Bucephalus made a short turn, she took her foot out of the stirrup

and jumped. But oh, horror! her skirt remained hitched on the horn of the saddle.

It was composed of treacherous alpaca, and Mrs. P. was solid and penetrating. She burst through it like the sun out of a cloud, and stood there in a basque waist of black alpaca, with ridiculous little tails on it, a pair of short, summer, white pants, trimmed with ruffles, a pair of striped brown and pink stockings, and two congress gaiters, without heels, No. 5½.

Lum-te-dum—lum-te-dum. Round went the horse. There was no imagination about it then; he had struck a circus at last, bless him; and so had we.

I was carried into the City Hotel and brought to during the afternoon by restoratives furnished from the most popular part of the building; but from that day till the other night I never saw Mrs. Pratt's costume reproduced till I saw the mermaid business of an actress at the Casino.

The damsels of the stage should make a decided stand against this idiotic style of dress. No matter how handsome a woman's form is, the half-and-half trick ruins it. It must be wholly male or wholly female, or the prettiest woman who ever stepped will be as much of a sight as was Mrs. Doctor Pratt when she lost her petticoat and nearly killed the subscriber.

A RELIGIOUS WATERING-PLACE.

THE public prints have a great deal to say every year about that autocrat of Asbury, Deacon Bradley, and it's popularly supposed around New York that his edicts are directed against the unconventional actress within his gates.

I've been reading of his late protest about bathing-suits and their continuance on the owner's back after the bath. So, when I went down to that cheerful resort to put in a holiday, I was greatly astonished to see the inhabitants clothed and in their right mind, and the theatrical colony by far the primmest and most clothed of all of 'em.

True, on the sands controlled by Bradley, there are signs which read: "Remember, modesty in a bath is as necessary as soap!" (Let us soap so.) And again: "A lady's water toilet should be made with discretion" (and a lock-stitch machine).

The Gusher recollects an awful morning at the sea when she picked a thread off a friend's bathing-dress, and was paralyzed to see a frantic female stand before her in a simple yoke of flannel and short pants. The ready-ripper machine had attached the blouse to the yoke, and out on the green crest of the dancing billows rode the garment, while Maria shouted for an ambulance, with a touching collar of blue flannel doing duty for a dress, waist, and skirt.

Behold! I had pulled the string that worked the show, and made as much of a mess of it as did Little

Jimmy Jumpup last May in his beautiful new suit, when in a Fourth Avenue car he pulled a thread off his gaiters and opened his pants on the outside seam from hem to pocket.

These anecdotes will crop up in these otherwise sedate papers, but they can be easily skipped by the student who reads me for moral support and religious instruction only, and not for amusement.

As I say, the Bradley signs indicate that trouble has existed between the bathing-suits and Bradley. But I saw no ladies shopping in wet flannel or promenading barefoot in all Asbury. Down at Ocean Grove, where the fervent Baptist lives in tents and the mild Methodist fills the air with hymns, the sister in Israel goes about in her bath-suit and the decorous deacon lies about all day in knit drawers and a hammock. But then real Christian people can do things with impunity that secular actresses couldn't think of without being condemned.

A camp-meeting flirtation is as much worse than a footlight mash as it's possible to imagine, and yet one doesn't get talked of and the other does. Along about six in the evening the air of Ocean Grove is strong of prayer and Medford rum. The religious lungs are often erinflated with Santa Cruz breath than the uninstructed dram-drinker.

There isn't a drop of dreadful liquor sold in all that sanctified spot, but there's more poor whiskey drank there than there is in the Sixth Ward. They wrap up demijohns in rags, and swathe junk-bottles in blankets. They move from the wicked city to the pious colony accompanied by such stuff as the wicked actor-man or woman would use on their backs if they sprained 'em, but never introduce into their stomachs for any complaint.

DELIGHTS OF THE COUNTRY.

I AM prepared to defend my statement when I say that New York as a watering-place, New York as a mountain retreat, and New York as a country summer resort lays away over Long Branch, Newport, the Catskills, and all the 'villes and 'tons and 'burgs that make up the list.

Your Gusher is a Cockney. The beauties of nature, with bugs and without ice, are respectfully declined by yours truly. The majesty of "ocean! mighty monster" is very nice; but when everything you touch has a saline dampness that will not dry and your shoes are full of sand, a little city, dry and hot without, comes in very well.

I've had a square laugh lately at some neighbors of mine. They are wealthy Germans, and the tinkering and improvements they keep up on their premises is past belief. Their houses are in the very heart of this dear old city; but rural life they are bound to enjoy in their back yards. One old man has put up a tent, and in it he sleeps night after night; the other has a little six-by-nine grape arbor. Quite early in the season the worms took off every particle of leaf from the skeleton vines. Undeterred by this condition of things, the dinner-table is set under this pastoral vine, the servants rush up and down the narrow flag-walk, and the family, carefully brushing off and picking out the worms, partake happily of the dishes brought to them from the comfortable house. A camphene lamp illuminates the scene, and

they no doubt find in the inconveniences and miseries attending the meal a pleasant approximation to the horrors of country life. As for the other cheerful old pill who sleeps in a tent, he's got a grape arbor and vine minus leaves over him, and on those slats the neighboring cats congregate and fairly startle the night. This brings out the Gusher's pack of five Scotch terriers, and if that nice old Dutchman doesn't think he's in the Adirondacks treed by bears, then he isn't a good hand at dreams.

Notwithstanding these rural felicities brought right to our door by energetic Germans, Monsieur got a kink in his noddle the other day that his gentle Gusher needed air and country life ; that she drooped, and was pining. Therefore an early start was made on one of those hot days for a heavenly retreat on the line of a Jersey railroad. "We'll try it for a week, anyway," said he. "Everybody is going to the country ; it's the proper thing to do, and I think it will be very delightful."

The cars were insufferably hot and dusty. Crossing some low, flat, marshy places, the first mosquitoes we had seen this year rushed hungrily upon us. We were landed at an exceedingly ornamental and gaudily painted depot, and conveyed by a topless wagon, under a broiling sun, three miles through sand that reached the hubs, to the sylvan retreat that should take the droops out of my dauntless spirits.

The best bed-room in the house was mine. I could easily write my name on the ceiling, and I'm no Mary Anderson or Helen Barry. It was four breadths of straw carpet wide, two trunks and a wash-stand long. There were twenty-four little spectacle-glasses framed together and called a window, and there was a four-post bedstead with a feather bed in one corner, and a German plate

mirror that represented me as a Chinese woman with eyes on the bias and a nose split up like a Connecticut clothes-pin, and riding straddle of an enormous rent in one cheek, that turned out, on investigation, to be my mouth. These suicidal articles of furniture prepared me to find my two quarts of water in the ewer so hard that the soap curdled and floated on its surface. My one little wooden rocker had been fitted to something so narrow and contracted that a week's practice on a picket fence was necessary to use it with safety.

But, then, Monsieur said, "I wasn't expected to live in my room," and I retorted, "I wouldn't be expected to live if I did." And we went down-stairs, where we were informed that we were late for dinner, but they'd do the best they could. It was just a quarter to one, and on hearing that announcement, the brave-hearted man fell down two stairs and shook the house to its foundation. We took hold of hands, determined to stand by each other through the perils of the meal with which we were threatened; and truly unity of purpose and determination were needed when we entered the dining-room. Measly 'skeeter bars filled the windows and doors; a damp, soggy piece of blue 'skeeter bar was stretched over the table; the nose of the water-pitcher lifted it off the cut-up green tomatoes, but it rested gracefully in the nice, warm butter. We were brought two plates of awful bean soup, a section of something that looked and smelled like a bit of fried drum-head, but proved to be tripe, an oleaginous slice of boiled salt pork, some string beans, unpeeled potatoes, slate-colored coffee and a piece of pie.

These articles were disputed for inch by inch by the flies. The thermometer on a brass-handled sideboard stated authoritatively that the mercury stood at 98°; the water was warm; some bottled lager was sour (the beer

man and the ice man had not arrived for that day). Leaving your correspondent, who has a lively turn for Natural History, to investigate the manners and customs of a plate of china that was sent to look after the pie, Monsieur went forth to investigate the surroundings of this delightful summer retreat. An hour went by. I sought my den above; the chair was impracticable. I sank upon the yielding surface of the bed. What is it Tennyson says? "Had I lain for a century dead, earth in my earthy bed," I couldn't have caught on to a more sepulchral, mouldy, musty smell than exuded from every pore of that dreadful couch. It was getting ready to rain outside—the flies just poured in. A variety of hot noises, the scratching of katydid hind-legs, the buzzing of a multitude of bumble-bees haunting a squash blossom that had ambitiously reached the little window, the far-off sharpening of a scythe and the clink of an anvil at a blacksmith's down the road, worked my nervous system up to the jumping-off place, when the door opened and admitted Monsieur. I knew him in a moment, despite the changes time and trouble had worked. I recognized him at once, and claim great credit for my quick perception.

The gallant youth had sallied forth in Saratoga blue flannel. He returned a gentle Jersey gray. The dust of the road had enveloped his once noble person; but the sun and the heat and the dust had taken all the noble out of him. A livid light danced in his off eye under a place where a bull mosquito had bitten him. A baleful gleam of malice darkened his nigh optic under a dreadful wasp-sting. A bee had tended to his tender nose and a hornet had staked out a claim on his intellectual brow. We neither of us spoke—to souls whose covers are worn thin by much suffering a glance is sufficient. I rose, and

with one accord, animated by a single thought, we two seized the handle of the commonwealth gripsack. We two lit out, and through the dust and heat of three long country miles never flagged or drew foot till the delicious red and greenery of the variegated station struck our delighted optics.

We slept in New York that night, and, with the help of Heaven and light of experience, we will pass every other summer night in the safe and comfortable precincts of a city home.

And yet out in that doleful, uncomfortable Jersey cottage two millionaires and their families are passing the summer. A reverend doctor is giving the place an air of piety, and an actor and theatrical author are lending a flavor of iniquitous and riotous living to the neighborhood. A demijohn—damning evidence of guilt—with the actor's name on the tag, stood on the platform of the station as we came away.

I wish 'em joy of it. They may have every feather of my bed; they may have my rocker and the corrugated looking-glass. Give me my dear, sweet, city home, with ice enough to make a little North Pole of my own, and the joys of a summer in New York.

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

I WANT to call the special attention of *savants* to a combination of circumstances that ought to mean something. If played as a three-numbered gig without a saddle, I should say it would pay. On the morning of Friday last the Gusher was doing the suburbs, and dropped in to see George Waters, who keeps the "Woodbine" up at Highbridge. He was showing her some alterations he intended to make in his establishment, and she was giving him some architectural advice, when whang through the ceiling came a leg with a blue overall on it and a good-sized cowhide boot on the end of it. The room was plastered and kalsomined overhead, but the other side had no flooring; and a carpenter walking from sleeper to sleeper missed his footing, stepped between the beams, and plunged through the length of his leg into the room below.

Billy Birch would say, play the leg, boot and all; but so much happened afterward that really one would have to let the boot go. Dropping in to see a busy housekeeping friend, she was found up to her eyes "doing up" curtains. They were stretched on immense frames, four layers thick, and she was bemoaning their tardy drying. "Set 'em up on end before the fire instead of keeping 'em in a horizontal position," said the Gusher. No sooner said than done. They were carefully raised on their beam ends, and ticklishly rested against the chandelier. Then a nice seance of scandal was begun. Madame knows it all, on both sides the Atlantic.

"He's going to marry her, is he?" said she. "I'd like to know how he can do it. We'll set this last poor creature aside. But there's Lottie, Topsy's sister; he married her, and she has two children; all London knows that; and Lottie knew all about him. Why, bless you, he was the lad in the Maccabe business; you remember her, Canterbury Hall Villiers' sister, a pretty little thing with four children, and Maccabe adored 'em all. He had this young man doing his accompaniments for him; but one day after dinner he woke from a nap, and seeking his wife, found the pianist had rather forgotten his position and got above his business. In fact, he was making love to his employer's wife, and then there *was* a time; he, however, forgave her, and ——"

Just here the big curtain stretcher came down, noiselessly but swiftly. The Gusher and her friend were sitting side by side when the wet, starched lace swept like a cloud upon them. There was a moment's interruption, and then those noble women burst through like a couple of stars, and sat calmly amid the wreck of Nottingham, waiting for further developments. Billy would have played both of us for all we were worth in the capital saddle; but this was a great day for catastrophes. It devolved on the evening to lay out the day.

The Gusher had got infatuated with the minstrels. She inveigled her young man into a pilgrimage up to the Cosmopolitan. There she was, Friday, pointing out with much enthusiasm the good things in the performance, when crash! bang!! behind her, one of the iron pillars supporting the gallery dropped through the floor, just as the carpenter's leg did through the Woodbine ceiling. Expecting the gallery to swoop down on her like the Nottingham lace curtains, and not expecting to go

through it as easily, she beat a hasty retreat; but where is the policy-shop that will rig a gig out of those events to pay for the amount of mental anxiety and physical damage that dropped into Friday along with the legs and iron pillars?

But speaking of theatrical belief in Jonahs, and theatrical superstitions, what a multitude of signs and omens the theatrical profession entertain! The mystic number 13 has a horror for any actor; the iniquity of Friday is fully believed in; an umbrella opened under a roof is sure disaster; to sing a bar of "Macbeth" music is to invite the bolts of fate.

The only able-bodied superstition the Gusher entertains is connected with ink and its diabolical significance. (How many persons will hold up their hands in pious acquiescence, thinking I mean the depredations committed under this giddy trade-mark! No. The guileless lead-pencil is answerable for these enormities.) I refer to the upsetting of ink. My first experience with it was many years ago, when, with a dress wet from recently spilled ink, I was called out of school to receive the news of a favorite uncle's death, and every death in my family since has been preceded by some accident of a like nature.

Then, again, will I ever forget the grotesque nature of another dread experience? It was at a hotel in Troy that the landlord, with a pallid face, hurriedly entered my room and begged me to go with his wife to the apartments of Mrs. ——, to whom it was necessary to break the awful news that her little girl had fallen over the banisters and been killed. The heart-rending duty could not be evaded, and with trembling limbs we betook ourselves to the stricken mother's room. She met us cordially and exclaimed, laughingly:

"I've met with such a frightful accident! Upset a whole bottle of ink."

I don't know how we went to work to enlighten her as to the frightful accident that really had occurred; but the first thing I knew, the unhappy Mrs. —— was in a dead faint, and the excited landlady had seized a bottle of cologne, emptied it on a towel, and was bathing the sufferer's head and hands, which would have been all very well if Mrs. —— had not been using the towel already to sop up the ink.

It is not so many years ago that Robert Heller was leaving the Fifth Avenue Hotel one Saturday afternoon for Philadelphia. As he entered his carriage he encountered the Gusher.

"What luck!" he cried. "You shall go with us; I'll take no denial. I'll go write a note to Monsieur; tell him I've kidnapped you, and he'll come on the midnight train. We'll have a gorgeous Sunday at Strawberry Hill."

Suiting the action to the word, Robert turned and ran back to his parlor on the first floor of the hotel, while I remained at the carriage with Haidee. Another minute, and in the best possible spirits, he appeared and laughingly exhibited his handsome white hand, the palm of which was covered with a huge ink-spot.

"I've upset the ink-bottle all over the table in my hurry," he explained, and I felt a chill creep over me as I viewed the fatal ink. I would not go to Philadelphia then, but promised to get there Sunday, and a dozen people can testify to my going up to the Fifth Avenue Theatre and being scolded for my idiotic superstition about spilt ink. Sunday, I did not get to Philadelphia; Monday, Robert's audience was dismissed in consequence of his sudden illness; and Tuesday night at

twelve o'clock I got a telegram, saying, "Heller died at nine o'clock."

Therefore do I nail down the ink-stands and tie in their stoppers, and confess I hold in religious dread the awful power of ink when spilled.

There's a popular superstition that Joaquin Miller is a poet. I put up my claim to train in the same band. Listen to Joaquin's last and the Gusher's first, which I find copied:

WAITING FOR HIM.

BY MILLER.

Over the mountains and down by the sea,
A dear old mother sits waiting for me;
Waiting for me, waiting for me,
A dear old mother sits waiting for me.

Oh, waiting long, and oh, waiting late,
Is a sweet-faced girl at the garden gate;
Over the mountains and down by the sea,
A sweet-faced girl is waiting for me.

LAYING FOR HER.

BY THE GUSHER.

Over the fence and under the tree,
The speckled hen is laying for me;
Laying for me, laying for me,
That patient old hen is laying for me.

On another lay, in a different way,
An indignant hen is laying for me;
With a tongue that's long, an arm that's strong,
That wicked old hen is laying for me.

Then again, that dense and opaque genius, Robert Browning, gets at it in his most obscure way. Hear him in

JOCOSERIA—PROLOGUE.

Wanting is—what?
Summer redundant,
Blueness abundant.
—Where is the spot?
Beamy the world, yet a blank all the same,
—Framework which waits for a picture to frame:
What of the leafage, what of the flower?
Roses embowering with nought they embower!
Come, then, complete incompletion, O Comer,
Pant through the blueness, perfect the summer!
Breathe but one breath
Rose-beauty above,
And all that was death
Grows life, grows love,
Grows love!

And then listen to your Gusher, who quotes from a jocose poem she has got under way:

WANTING NOW—WHAT?

An atom of sense—
Striking out, trying to hit the intense!
Seeking to write something, simply immense,
—That is the dodge.
Fooling the world, yet a fool all the same
—Eternally trying the same old game.
What of the Juniper—what of the gin?
Does it thicken the speech? The story's too thin.
Toxicate—intoxication. O Bummer,
Pants worn all last winter must last through summer.
Breathe but one breath—
Alcoholic—and death
Overtakes the rash fly
That is lingering nigh.
Thus he grows and grows, and every one knows
When oats, peas, beans and barley grows.

Now, for unadulterated idiocy, who's on deck with the boys any quicker than your Giddy Gusher?

SOME AWFUL MOTHERS.

Not very long ago I heard some cold-water colporteur say that the saddest spectacle on earth was a "drunken father." Perhaps there was a time when I might have indorsed that statement; but I have seen so much lately of the "immoral mother," that the old man blind drunk is an innocent and enjoyable exhibition. The daughter is always an actress. Thank God! the mother does not often belong to the profession. But at this time there are dozens of actresses whose wicked old mothers connive at the infamy of their daughters. They are not the poor black alpaca frumps of the green-room, who descant with gin-and-watery eyes and speech on the talents and beauty of *that* dear girl. This is a new crop—dressed within an inch of their lives; connoisseurs in *petit soupers;* epicures who delight in champagne luncheons provided by wealthy admirers of their daughters.

They must be getting very plentiful, these awful old women. I encountered three of them lately in one day. It was on board an ocean steamer that I stumbled on Convenient Mamma No. 1. Here she had been all the week witnessing her daughter's improprieties—unblushingly assisting the girl to lose the shred of a reputation she claimed. There she was, fully cognizant of the scandal already in the air—knowing perfectly well that this trip abroad, under the circumstances, was the most damaging thing her child could undertake. But she smirkingly lent her ancient countenance to the whole

affair, and smiled on the girl's Lothario, like a Cheshire cat. And this was a baked-bean, brown-bread Boston matron, from whom a daughter should expect untiring vigilance and watchfulness, lest the New York wolf should prowl round the Massachusetts lamb. She had hung round the wings of a theatre while her profitable progeny sat in the star's dressing-room. She had seen the girl go in with the gentleman, when arrayed in the costume of his part, and emerge with the gentleman when he was ready to go home, and when the company were discussing the barefaced proceedings. She, the old hen! saw no impropriety. She never counselled the silly girl to avoid further remark by some pretence of decency, and she sailed away content, knowing that she had helped on to ruin the tender feet entrusted to her guidance.

It was a disgusting spectacle, and I had hardly got it out of my mind's eye when a similar one presented itself. In a stage-box of a popular theatre, attired in such gorgeousness of apparel as human wit and wealth can devise, and bad taste heap on one little figure, sat mamma-chaperoned actress No. 2. This mother was a peony of flourishing immorality. The gold trappings on her refulgent form looked like a spangle-dealer's show window. Several insipid youths danced in to hang round the young woman, and the old one made them very welcome, until of a sudden the burly individual who at present is the permanent basis of all the regalia darkened the box-door. Then mamma's administrative ability came in. She took the adolescent sprigs into her choicest confidence. To each one she imparted the information that Mr. —— wanted to see the dear child on a matter of business, and she adroitly slipped them out on an inclined plane of maternal anxiety and hospi-

tality. Then she shrugged her shoulders and audibly rejoiced at deliverance from those insufferable cads—when a month before one of the insufferable cads was the mainstay of her establishment, and her "dearest, dearest boy."

Wandering home under the April stars, I met a prominent manager, gazing dolefully at a remarkably hearty moon, hanging over the house-tops with a well-developed smile on its rotund visage.

"I believe the confounded thing is laughing at me," he said.

"It's not unlikely," I replied. "It's not so full but it has taken in the latest news concerning your petted prima donna."

And the manager groaned and inwardly vowed that the solar system should never be afforded amusement again through his foolishness.

"Serves me right," he acknowledged. "I put the girl in a position to injure me. But for me she would have been humbly trotting home with her little hard-earned salary. I aided her to rise from the lowest grade to popularity and celebrity."

And then I interfered and said "notoriety" was a better word. "Celebrity" she would never attain; for the road the young woman had selected to travel led direct to loss of popularity, ability, and an early grave.

"Don't blame yourself for her muddled career," said I; "where's that old reprobate, her mother?"

For every sin in the lives of the three girls I have mentioned, I honestly believe those three old women will roast in the hottest corner of Hades. Where was that mother when that No. 3 girl was a wife and mother? Did she counsel her daughter, out of her own experience, to find pleasure and pride in her home and baby? No;

she led the wayward young thing to look at the peace of a decent life as a wretched fate; to believe that champagne and chicken salad with Tom, Dick and Harry, and orgies with young idiots in neighboring cities, and splendid dresses and showy jewelry, were the only desirable things in life. She saw her child fling away every element of earthly happiness, and take to every phase of reckless extravagance and fast living, without a syllable of protest. She publicly avowed her belief in the nonsense of a husband and a child for a woman who would live happily. When her daughter skipped off in a half-dazed condition with some crazy male companion, the old woman undertook to cover their tracks with those who had a right to expect their business contracts should be respected. Oh! there will come a day of reckoning for these old recreant Tabbies—when, ruined in health, faded in beauty, poor and forgotten, the one-time favorite will spend her last days quarrelling with and cursing at the wretched hag of a mother who aided and abetted the follies that blasted the daughter's life.

No matter how much a girl rebels at control, she respects the loving guidance she may complain of. I remember an instance that showed me that, however young a girl was, she has a sense of right and feels a contempt for any laxity of proper authority in her management. This incident occurred many years ago, and the girl was not more than fourteen. The mother was a good, weak, God-fearing woman, who had a wholesome awe of influential and prominent persons. In the country town where these people lived, one of the most noted men was a clergyman huge in stature and very unclerical in his tastes. He contracted a habit of spending hours on the doorstep of this old lady, chatting all sorts of nonsense with the daughter. And this girl knew as well as

possible that the whole programme was utterly wrong. The Bible-banger was married ; had children near her own age, and his conversation of an evening was about as secular as he could make it.

However, the affair drifted on ; the parson kept coming, and the old lady kept out of the way. One night, however, she unexpectedly bounced upon the pair at the garden gate. The minister's arm was around the frightened girl's waist, and she was struggling to escape a warm embrace, when ma, en route from class-meeting, burst out of the bushes. The child felt her heart leap with delight, since now the Rev. Mr. Mushead was going to catch it.

Not a catch ! The bumps of veneration and reverence on that pious old head wouldn't allow her to interfere with a pastor's sport. She made a deep courtesy, and, with an idiotic quotation from Scripture about there being "giants in those days," went into the house, while the girl, disgusted, filled with contempt for such maternal laxity, flung herself against the little gate and wept. Then when the Rev. Dr. Mushead asked her the cause of this sudden grief, the child fired up and told him what an old scoundrel she thought he was, and what a blasted fool she knew her mother was.

"Why, if I ever have a daughter," said the young lady, "and any religious pump with a wife and family comes fooling round that girl, I'll come out of the house and brain him with a water-pot." And suiting the action to the word, she seized the convenient article and dealt her reverend companion a clip on the nose that adorned the pulpit with court-plaster for three succeeding Sundays.

Oh, these mothers ! What a deal they are answerable for !

"BABY" LITERATURE.

EVERY little while a batch of letters in some divorce, murder, or breach-of-promise case turns up and fills the public with astonishment at their fellow-creatures' idiocy. I suppose a hundred women in this city have written notes this week and signed 'em "Baby." That form of stupidity has a special fascination. In the name of common sense, let the McClean letters from Stapleton injure the Baby business. Our young friend Barwick stood more drivel of this kind than seems credible. He treasured up the Baby literature with an object, no doubt, for the gentleman is thrifty and has an eye to business. The young woman has money, if she has not brains. This remarkable suit for breach-of-promise, brought by a man, is not so ridiculous after he gets in the correspondence. Some compensation is due a fellow who gets such letters planted along his path in life, and were I on the jury I'd give the sufferer half the "Baby's" fortune.

A stop ought to be put to this thing some way, and heavy damages may do it. You take a big fat old lady, a relic of the black alpaca period—you take a muscular, tripe-like female with a wart on her nose—find a whopping greasy damsel with freckles, strabismus and bandy-legs, and bet your moroccos, if you can entice either one of 'em into writing you a love-letter, it will be signed "Baby" to a dead certainty.

I have a funny case in mind that illustrates the state-

ment. Some years ago in my employ I had the ugliest, most appalling specimen of the *genus* woman one ever beheld. Loweesa was Dutch, toothless, humpbacked, marked with the smallpox, very cross-eyed and about fifty years of age. Her first acquaintance with English was made with a family of six boys who swore like pirates ; consequently Loweesa swore cheerfully, unconsciously, and originally. Her profanity used to remind me in its construction of the innocent old man who went to the tavern for the first time and returned home anxious to use the pretty words he'd picked up. Looking round for something to swear at, he saw the door open and broke out with : " Lord all Hell, wife, shut the door by a damn sight ! "

Loweesa used to start off like a clucking hen with a " cuss-cuss-cuss ke damn." So she came in one day, after I had known her about six months and began : " Cuss-cuss-cuss ke damn, Missis, vas du gedanken ? Ich habe ein shutz, und das fool vas goming mit Sunday night." Then it came out that the lover was a Yankee, and had written Loweesa a love-letter that demanded an answer. Loweesa's triumph over profane English hadn't been great enough to whip reading and writing, so she kindly intrusted the conduct of her correspondence to me, and the dictation went on as follows :

" Dell him he vas a nice feller and I geeps gompany py him ; und dell him I hopes to see him Sunday, und to gum early py de house, und pring his razor——"

" His what ? "

" Der Gott im Himmel—ja—dem corns has me like crazy, und Schmidt bin ein doctor ; ein doctor for ein pferd."

So the letter to the horse doctor progressed. She sent her love several times. She assured him of her intention

to geep his gompany, and when we arrived at the matter of signature I was about to put down "Louisa."

"Nein, nein!" exclaimed the enamoured horror; "das is nicht forstanza! Ich bin sein Baby." And I had strength given me to look that old pirate in the face and write her down "Baby."

I should not leave the subject without telling you something of this remarkable courtship, which resulted in a happy marriage and a pair of twins.

Schmidt came every Saturday night, all winter, when the ensuing conversation always occurred, without any variation:

"Goot evening, Schmidt."

"Good evening, Loweesa." Silence for a time.

"Vat villst du haben, Schmidt, lager or schnapps?"

"Well, Loweesa, I'll take a glass of beer with you, I guess."

"Hast du dim razor gebracht?"

"Yes, Loweesa; how is them corns of yours?"

"——— ——— — ——— ——— — ——— ——— — ——— ———," was Loweesa's fluent and truthful reply, after which the surgical operation took place, and perfect silence, broken only by the lifting of a pitcher and the clinking of glasses, reigned in the kitchen till nine, when Loweesa would say, "Vell, Schmidt, das vas dime you pin going. Good nicht."

And Schmidt would take another very squeaky kiss, another drink, and depart. In the spring I had the pleasure of fixing up one of the most dreadful bridal spectacles I ever beheld, and the following year Loweesa made her appearance in company with Schmidt, who had taken a day off for exhibition purposes. They both carried bundles, and Loweesa exploded in the old fashion:

"Cuss-cuss-cuss ke damn! Missis, vas du gedanken? Schmidt und I have zwei twins."

Sure enough, when they were unrolled there were two of the ugliest babies in the world.

"And what have you named the darlings?" I asked.

"Diese bin eine girl, das vas Mary, und dieser bin ein knabe, und he vas Yram."

"That's a strange name, isn't it?"

"It's the same name turned around," explained Schmidt. "My wife wanted 'em both named for you."

To this minute I don't consider I'm accountable for any wicked ways I may have. Any woman with two such goblins named after her as Mary and Yram Schmidt are to-day, should not be judged harshly.

THE WATCHMAN'S GHOST.

"THAT's a beautiful Bible passage," said old Mrs. Crofut to me—"that about 'sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care.' It just heels and toes me when I'm clean frayed out."

"And oh," said the Gusher, to her friend, the manager, "do put air pillows and head-rests into a few seats while you are making alterations in your theatre. Give me a rest and a place to sleep nicely in a theatre and I'm happy. I've been at it since the palmy days of the Bowery."

I'm old Freligh's ghost.

During Hamblin's administration one of the theatre watchmen got a notion of sleeping in one of the third tier boxes. He run in a little cot bed, and there he was, snug and comfortable; but one night he got too much Hester Street whiskey on board, and instead of lying down in his cot bed he just tumbled out over the rail and came whizzing down to the foot-lights. They found him impaled and quite dead the next morning on one of the ornamental spikes that finished the stage off on each side. After this, with astonishing regularity, for many years, the watchman's ghost was seen.

Dear old George Fox, of pleasant memory, was doing his first edition of pantomime, and I went to see it with a party of friends for the fiftieth time. During the evening they withdrew, and I went to the back of the box for a quiet sleep. Every one on the stage supposed I had

gone with the rest. The curtain fell ; the lights were put out ; the audience dispersed ; the company dressed and went home, and still the Gusher slept. About three o'clock I awoke, and where on earth or off it I was, was beyond my ability to tell.

I prowled about my narrow quarters and felt of the windowless walls that enclosed me in their sides. A damp, mouldy smell pervaded the place, a stifling feeling oppressed my lungs. "Now," said I, "can I have chipped in at the game of life, and been planted without knowing it?" All at once I struck the window ; the lace curtains and the velvet rail reassured me. I peered into the darkness. Of a sudden a glimmer of light from the front shone on the midnight blackness of the place. I let out a beautiful cry of distress ; the third and fourth tiers took it up ; the flies sent it to the paint frame ; the pit caught it on the bounce, and a dozen nooks and crannies of the old theatre chorused my effort.

It was the style in those days to wear white fur cloaks. I was a perfect pioneer to style. Arrayed in a white fur cloak, I stood in the proscenium-box and watched the effect of my howls. The baize centre doors swung back, and, holding aloft a bull's-eye lantern, there stood Freligh. He threw a line of light hastily up and down, and then, as it fell on my admirable proportions, he just cast his lantern down, uttered a brief cuss-word, and fled.

Then I was mad and lifted my voice in good earnest. Such a pow-wow as I made, sounded like Proctor in "the Jibbenanoisay," and Jim Webb as *Macduff* rolled into an elocutionary whole. Dear old Joe Dowling was a police captain then, or a newly-made justice—I forget which. Anyway, he was on the street when Freligh piled out asserting that the watchman's ghost was pulling up the benches inside. George Worden, Joe Dowling,

and Dan Kerrigan came to the rescue. They got a gas-lighter, two candles and a kerosene lamp. Timidly the big doors swung back, and the brave party, headed by Freligh, advanced two or three steps inside. The gas-lighter I took for a rifle, and cried out to them not to shoot, so that we scared each other pretty equally. At all events, I was escorted home, and received my thirty-second lecture on sleeping in theatres.

But it's a great blessing, and next to the corner in a fat red maroon cushioned pew in church, an orchestra seat in a theatre is the place for dreaming. Why 'twas in an orchestra chair that I went on a grand tour as manageress of a syndicate as *was* a syndicate. I did "Antony and Cleopatra" with Susan B. in the title rôle; I did "My Wife's Baby" with John Raymond; I put on "Glin Gath" with George Alfred Townsend; I did "Painless Dentistry" with Dr. Colton as leading man. I went for the new pieces and produced "The Ace of Clubs," with Captain Williams, and "The Ace of Spades," with Mike Murray; "Rank and Riches," with Lord Mandeville and Jay Gould, and a splendid pantomime (original) entitled "Down in the Mouth; or, The Adventure of Jonah in the Whale's Society."

Ah! then I had a clown—Talmage—and what a daisy clown he made! In my delight at his success I got thoroughly waked up—and then I went on thinking of Talmage after my dream was over, and a report I had read of his sermon last week, in which he entreated his Christian hearers not to treat God flippantly. Now, that was a cheerful request from the Boss Flipper. I would like to call Tally's attention to the flippancy of the only two sermons I ever heard him preach. He opened the first occasion by assuring us that God was in our midst—that Christ was on hand. "He is here,"

screamed Talmage ; "He is entering now." He pranced down the platform with extended arms ; he met an air-drawn Saviour, shook his invisible hand, escorted him to a big arm-chair, and saying "Sit down, Christ," waved his big claw at the empty piece of furniture, and triumphantly exclaimed : "There sits Christ!" Now, if you can flip us anything more flippant than that, let's hear it.

On the second occasion, my dream-clown executed a sword-dance about his stage, showing how people dodged the Word of God. "Why," said he, "some persons hearing the voice of the Redeemer, beat it off. They treat the Saviour like a dog. They say, 'Get out, Christ!'" And Talmage stamped and kicked as if a snarling cur was barking at his heels. I tell you when things are straightened out and the world strikes its proper groove, my dream will be fulfilled and my syndicate will boast the greatest clown on earth—Talmage of the Tabernacle, the champion flipper of flippancy.

THE DRUG CRAZE.

PERHAPS some people think the proper place to see exhibitions of faith and spectacles of belief is within the portals of the sanctuary. Not at all. If you would look upon truthful believers, go to a drug-shop. There's hardly a worshipper in our churches but has doubts on some article of faith ; but, oh ! the credulous confidence of the 'pothecary patrons. It's astonishing.

The Gusher went into the drug business early. She discovered the yearning of the human heart to take pills and powders at the unripe age of six. She opened a drug-store under the front stoop of the family residence, and sold powders made of flour, sugar and ground cinnamon for one pin apiece. The infant ills that succumbed to this course of medicine having given way to another form of disease, requiring, in the early druggist's opinion, heroic treatment, your Gusher compounded some diabolical powders of starch, indigo and washing-soda. Eighteen children partook of twenty-five of these laundry powders, and every doctor in town was busy that night, when, more or less sick, the Gusher's patients waked the echoes with their disturbed little insides. Twenty-five pins and a hundred curses, a mass-meeting of infuriated parents and a proposition to lynch me, was the result of that day's drug business, but it did not shake my belief in the hankering of the human heart to take things.

A man on Broadway has met a great want by putting up little medicine-chests that are filled with numbered

bottles of pills. Accompanying this box is a book wherein you read : " For general lassitude—indisposition to do anything—desire for perfect repose, take No. 14 at 10 A. M., and follow up with Nos. 19 and 46 between 2 P. M. and 6 P. M., returning to No. 14 at bedtime," etc., etc.

" For reluctance to rise and tendency to lie down during the day, take No. 51 in moderate doses until exhausted, and continue with Nos. 30 and 65. (Bottles can be replenished singly at any of our agencies)," etc., etc.

This is a noble work of art, but it isn't as attractive as going to the drug-store and laying in large bottles and small doses of all sorts of medicaments.

Having lost a small dog down a coal-hole in front of a drug-store, I went in to get an adhesive plaster that would not only draw out the dog but enable me to stick to it after its recovery. And while the proprietor suggested another course of treatment, and went down in the cellar to bring the dog, after his prescription, I sat on a stool and watched the customers.

Great Cæsar's ghost ! what a gang. I noticed that no matter how small, young, and green the youth who waited on 'em, they called 'em all " Doctor," and the airs of those medicated runts were insufferable. I made it very pleasant for one particularly obnoxious little wretch by saying :

" Hand me one of those almanacs, *bubby*. I may as well improve my mind." Now, if I had bought a seidlitz powder of that lad after that speech, he would have said, " Let's have an end of that terror," and chucked in an ounce of arsenic.

I made believe not to see the malignity with which he gave me a Liver Pad almanac and Cherry Pectoral cir-

cular. A large lady, with an entire upper and under set of store teeth, smiled with unflinching confidence in 'em, and simpered as she examined some tooth-powder :

" Do you recommend this, Doctor, as being perfectly harmless ? I imagine Sozodont is injuring mine ; they feel sensitive to the touch after using it."

I could not restrain myself, and blurted out :

" Then be careful how you handle 'em when you take 'em out."

Only that the Directory was tied up I would have been brained on the spot. The enraged woman ordered a box of Brandreth's pills, two capcine plasters, a pint of hamamelis, a bottle of citrate of magnesia, one dozen rhubarb compound fracture pills, three ounces of senna, and ninety-six drops of croton oil, and dashed out. I don't believe she is so mad this morning. I hope her anger has left her, and that she has forgiven me.

The woman that took that woman's place wanted some anodyne liniment, an electric belt, a liver-pad, Kendall's Spavin Cure, and Dixon's Condition Powders and Oriental Cream. She in turn gave room to a woman who wanted Wilbur's Cod Liver Oil, Aunt Sally's Corn Cure, Pond's Extract, Jacob's Oil, Warburgh's Tincture, four bottles Kumyss, half a pound of ten-grain quinine pills, a pint of colchicum, the same quantity of iodide of potassium and an electric hair-brush. She went home to have a good time, and I aimlessly read the pretty words on the jars—" Bi-carnal Bromide," " Col. Clynth.," " Assafœtida," " Cammomile," " Slippery Elm," " Flax-seed " —is there anything more comfortable than a flax-seed poultice ? I think a flax-seed poultice and a hop pillow would make a beautiful bed.

You remember Louisa Eldridge's adventure with a

mustard poultice, don't you? It's a good many years ago, when Louisa was young and charming, Captain Eldridge and she were stopping at a country hotel, when in the middle of the night the Captain was taken with cramps, and Louisa slipped on a dressing-gown and went down to the porter, who took her to the kitchen, where she manufactured a rousing mustard poultice. She ran rapidly up stairs that the blamed thing should not cool. She flew along the passage till she saw the dim light over the transom. She flitted into the room, she rushed up to the bed, she pulled down the spreads, she yanked up a night-gown and she clapped a red-hot mustard plaster on the pit of a stomach, saying, "That will relieve you, my dear!" And a great big *strange* man sat up and cursed her like a pilot off Sandy Hook. Poor Louisa! She had cramps herself before she gained her own room, and fainted on the hearth-rug, while the man with the mustard poultice went raging round to find his unknown assailant.

I don't know how many funny things I should have been reminded of in that drug-shop if the proprietor had not come up the trap with the lost dog. But I would like to ask my simple sex what on earth they use such a lot of trumpery medicine for! How on earth can they believe in so many quack nostrums? Once in a while you find a man given to trying all sorts of drugs, but it's the women who support the apothecaries. No wonder they are the weaker sex. I'm amazed they have any strength at all.

I knew one gentleman, as bald as a pound of butter, who is always trying everything. A lady friend fell out of a hammock this summer and sustained injuries that rendered a very complicated prescription necessary. This gentleman was going into the city, and the lady

asked him to kindly leave the prescription at Caswell's and have it sent out by messenger.

"Certainly," said the old Curiosity Shop as he took it; "what's this for?"

"To promote the growth of the hair," said the lady. "I think sea bathing is making my hair come out." The gentleman took the recipe and trotted off. Three weeks after he said: "By the way, Mrs. ——, how is that prescription doing for you? Do you find it of any benefit? For you see I took the liberty of having it put up for myself, and I have been rubbing it into my head faithfully for twenty days and I can't discern a hair as yet."

Oh, Moses! How did that woman control herself to answer? I should have exploded like an overcharged rocket.

And while I am on the subject of hair-growing, let me give my dear sisters a word of warning—particularly those belonging to the dramatic profession. Don't use vaseline on your face—vaseline is made from petroleum. Petroleum makes the hair grow without a doubt. I notice a downy growth on ladies' faces just now that I never did before. I meet a score of women a day that have moustaches—beards that would give a barber actual work. I believe vaseline is responsible for the trouble. Theatrical people buy pound cans of this substance and dash it on at night to remove "make-up;" the result, nine times out of ten, is a pair of Dundreary whiskers and a military moustache.

You know the story they tell to advertise vaseline pomade, that it was discovered by a workman on a railway who was entirely bald. This man used to trim the lamps in which petroleum was burned, and wipe his fingers—like the tidy creature man always is—on his hairless conk. Of a sudden he discerned hair, actual

feathers, sprouting in the spots where his greasy fingers had been. Presently he had tufts of foliage on his head, and thus were the hair-growing properties of petroleum discovered and incorporated in vaseline—which beats old Dr. Graham's Unguent for forcing the beard in six weeks.

THE STORY TOLD BY THE CACTUS.

THERE are two subjects on this earth that are as inevitable and unavoidable as Time, and they can be dismissed from every one's mind as easily as Johnny's sum is washed off his slate.

If a man should know for certain that some time during his life he was going to get his leg smashed, and it would have to be taken off, that inevitable operation would embitter every waking hour and fill his nights with mares.

He knows that, near or far, there is surely advancing, with ceaseless steps, the hour when his special box will be carted to him, and his special hole in the earth will be dug, and into the two he will be put for his last final abiding place. He forgets that all the time. He never gives that more than a moment's thought.

A mother suffers the agonies of death almost in bringing a child into the world. Prayers are said in the churches for her recovery, and amid thanksgiving and praise she gets through a very tough experience. One year from that time the very same inevitable trial awaits her a few months off. She's as cheerful as a cricket and dismisses the unpleasant subject from her mind. Whereas, if the woman has had a cancer removed and there is another one come, and a second operation is imminent, she never knows one instant's peace, though the beastly thing occasions little or no pain, as is sometimes the case.

The human mind can always forget about birth and

death. If the fate of everybody was to be ultimate injury of a painful but not fatal character, we should be a nation of weepers and wailers—unable to disabuse our troubled minds of that horrible destiny for one single moment. And yet the dread hand that we are shocked to see laid on those around us, is raised and waiting above our own heads ready to strike the inevitable blow, and we hardly ever give it a thought.

"It's that which may be in another life that frightens me," says the Colonel, who is popularly supposed to be afraid of nothing.

"It's the awful uncertainty about the actual ending of this one that troubles me," I reply.

Beecher and I know all about hell. We don't believe there's an ounce left over from this life to fix up another. Notwithstanding all the dreadful reports of heaven made by different denominations of religious teachers, I ain't afraid of going there, because, possessing a very conformable spirit, I can make myself comfortable and content almost anywhere ; but it would be a very reassuring discovery if some one would find out that in our graves we stop knowing. I've got an awful idea that as long as the vital spark furnishes life to the hair on our heads and the nails on our fingers and toes, that dreadful intelligence, that consciousness we possessed when walking round, is only bound in icy fetters, and may be making agonizing, intangible protest against the inroads of decay.

Somehow I feel as if there was something in me that was never going to blow out. I tried a fainting fit the other day ; those around me said I was wholly unconscious for quite a time. I wouldn't want to print the experience of my thinking machine during the period when I was apparently as senseless as an oyster. I can never get it out of my head that vegetables are not sen-

tient beings. I mash a potato as gently as possible that I may not hurt its feelings, and the tenderness with which I shell peas would teach a total stranger that I held 'em in different esteem than the common run of mortals do.

I had an experience in England once that has more or less affected my relations with the vegetable kingdom. Kew Gardens, just out of London, were very attractive to me. They are wonderfully stocked with the rarest and strangest plants the earth ever produced. I've spent days in 'em. I've sat beside the fly-catching plant, and fooled it with a straw from a whisk-broom to my heart's content; but it found me out, that smart old plant. I'd touch it slyly far down in the heart of its gloomy blossom. Snap it would shut up, and begin feeling round with its stamens and pistil for the supposed fly—no flies. I'd go off and come back unexpectedly when it had set the trap again. This time I'd drop a thread with a seed attached into the unsuspecting blossom; up it would shut again. But the third time it was ready for me. No more playing crows at home with me. It actually winked as I tried the old straw, as much as to say, "I'm no agricultural ass." And he wasn't.

The cactus house was particularly interesting to me. Gardeners here who think they know what cactus means because they have a prickly old green spine with a few gable ends growing on 'em, should see the cacti of Kew. Great Cæsar's ghost! What a show they plant on the earth; solid legs like a real man, which go up and support a huge bulbous body, that in turn throws off very fair arms and a head not to be despised. There they were, hundreds of them standing in huge pots together. Some looked as if they were fighting, and others might have been engaged, so lovingly did they lean toward each other. They were six and eight and ten feet high.

I was on very good terms with the tribe, and one afternoon I sat down in the greenhouse on a tub and lazily contemplated 'em. There is a warm, oppressive silence in a hothouse that always makes me sleepy. I leaned against the pleasant legs of an old he cactus and went off to sleep. The long twilight of an English evening passed away; a nice fat British moon rose over the premises, and I awoke. Where on earth I was I couldn't tell; but gradually my senses trooped back. I remembered the afternoon and that which I had done in it, and I started to leave the conservatory.

Not much; the big glass door was securely locked. I had got to sleep with the cactuses, and I went back and told them so. Will you believe it if I tell you that one of them laughed? I don't suppose you will; but it did. I went back to the place where I originally fell asleep, and to that particular sympathetic plant I related the situation. Again I leaned against his comfortable old legs and again I went to sleep. It might have been an hour later when something touched me on the head, and I looked, and behold, my gentleman cactus had dropped into a sitting position, had placed one of his lately raised arms upon my forehead, and was bending his nubbly green head solicitously over me.

"Are you comfortable?" he said, in a choked and strange tone.

"Perfectly," I replied; "but astonished at this alteration in your attitude and personality."

"It is given me at the full of every moon to resume for one hour some of the attributes I possessed when in the flesh some thousand years ago."

"Good heaven!" I cried. "Were you ever a real-for-true man, such as you resemble vaguely in shape?"

"I was," replied the cactus. "I belonged to the Bronze Age, was a bronze bandit king of wondrous fame, but devoured by bad passions and evil intentions. My warfare with man was carried on by the use of spears and lances, and every awful spike you see upon my body represents some injury I did a fellow-creature. Just as many of these prickly spikes as you see sticking out of my body, just as many are sticking into me. I was killed in battle at last and buried by my fellows. I hadn't been a week underground before I felt a pulpy, pushing sensation in my head. With constant persistency I poked through my cerements and the helmet in which I was planted, and struck at last the sunshine and the showers. You can never imagine the uneasiness of growing until you are resolved into a vegetable—the obstructions met by your roots, and the uncertainty attending the portion of your person projected into the air.

"Every evil characteristic I had as a man burst forth upon my bulbous body as an excrescence. Every cruel blow I ever struck bristled as an ever-pricking spine upon my sides and limbs. I had one hope of escape. The forests about me were drinking in the heat of the sun, preparatory to a long sleep in the ground, during which they would become coal, be discovered by man, and on account of the heat they had drunk, which was slumbering in their bosoms, it would be carted once more upon earth, and get, by the process of burning, again into the atmosphere and enjoy out-door life in some winged form.

"Alas! Along came one day some cursed collector of botanical specimens. My peculiar shape attracted attention. I was dug up and transplanted a dozen times. I believe for every great wrong I did my fellow-creatures when a man I have to be pulled up as a cactus. It's only

yesterday I heard the head gardener say: 'That old fellow is getting too big for his tub.'

"Now, if you could get an American capitalist to buy me, I could expect, when he burst up and his conservatory was sold, I might be knocked about, destroyed as a cactus, and get back in some less dreadful and comfortless shape. Here at Kew, under the governmental protection, I am likely to last for centuries."

I promised that poor plant I would see Vanderbilt or Gould about him, and try and get him an ephemeral position in America.

I must have dozed off during some of his repinings, for at six I was roused by hearing men talking outside. I suppose you will say it was all a dream—that I slept straight through. Much you know about it! When I looked about the cactus had resumed his position. I found a pair of overalls and an old straw hat belonging to the gardener. With the aid of a rake I put the hat on my poor cactus friend's head. I ripped open the overalls behind and pinned them together about my unhappy friend's legs. And to this day the men working in the cactus-house at Kew will tell you how the American woman was locked up there all night and amused herself dressing up the plants in old clothes.

No wonder, then, that your Gusher is troubled about the effects of planting, and is giving a good deal of her attention to the new idea of cremation—with a view of stopping her eventual growth underground.

OUIDA.

THE woman who writes a note or a novel that rubs the bloom off this old plum, the earth, is a worse thief than the gonoff who prigs one's supper. I say woman, for I can't call to mind a male writer belonging to the iconoclastic school of Louise de la Ramee, the novelist Ouida.

I laid down "Othmar," with a devout hope that Maria wouldn't be unfortunate enough to read it. Maria is morbid and sentimental, and gets her facts from fiction and her views of life from romances.

"A blamed unhealthy, unwholesome volume," said I. "It's no wonder that certain circulating libraries of good moral character won't allow Ouida a place on their shelves."

Sure enough I got a letter from Maria next week. She spoke sadly of an approaching birthday. "There is little to live for after thirty," wailed she in inky spasms.

"She's struck 'Othmar' for a certainty," thought I, as I went on.

"Time is so unmerciful in its treatment of women," sobbed my friend. "Its beastly hand strips us of everything. It gives us nothing." Oh, doesn't it? Perhaps, Maria, you have not had the rheumatism. Yes, my friend Maria has just read "Othmar." She has risen from the reading imbued with a sense of discomfort—of impending disaster—of unreal and unnatural misery.

Do you want to know the sensation created in me by

the reading of that book? It was one of pity for the woman bilious enough to write it. I can understand just how Ouida writes these disappointed, embittered books, for I was on deck once when she was garnering material for a three-volume outpour of gall and bitterness.

It was a good many years ago, when Ouida was beginning to make a noise. She was in London, but unrecognized by the literary fraternity. In fact, I doubt if she would make a ripple if she were there to-day. Ouida is much more popular in the United States than in England, *pour cause.*

Well, as I say, it was a good many years ago, and Miss Ramee, who had been materially helped in fortune by Harry Stone, a banker in Paris (who at one time was one of the howling swells in New York), was in London, and head over heels in love with a good-looking, thick-headed young man, about fifteen years her junior.

I had a friend who had furnished a pretty house on South Audley Street with all the majolica pots Howell & James had in stock.

What a regular old cockney shop it was, to be sure! And when I found her one day in the dumps, I assured her it was Dresden shepherdesses, majolica cacti, cloisonné, blue enamel and mediæval designs in pottery, acting directly on her cerebral diatessaron, and indirectly on her diaphragm filter.

We went to Devonshire to study shepherdesses that were not attached to porcelain, and bulls that were not in a china-shop. But before we went we rented the house—all but two rooms—for transient occupancy, to a tall, raw-boned woman with a perfectly shocking shock of yellowish hair.

The woman had one of those featureless faces that in young or old are never the faces a man tries often to kiss.

She was a daisy to look at, and very shortly we found she was a very field flower in worldly wisdom.

She lived at the Langham Hotel, I believe; but she installed the thick-limbed, thick-headed, thick-skinned young man in South Audley Street. Rented with the house were two capable servants with the usual complement of eyes and the usual limberness of tongue.

Every time we forsook the hills of Devon and visited the china shop we heard a ton of *scan. mag.*

"That woman his ha hass," said the cook. "She's a fetchin' o' chops through the street hin 'er hown 'ands. She comes to the kitching hand stirs hup possets for that there lob-lolly boy. She's an 'oly 'orror with 'er coddlin's."

And indeed it was ridiculous to see the worship laid at a very sizable pair of British boots by this devoted and ugly woman. The hulking young man sniffed with evident weariness at the incense continually burned before him. He laid around and smoked and read *Bell's Life*, and along about the middle of the day the madam arrived with whitebait in a tin can and strawberries in pottles.

The maid-of-all-work said the matured siren let down her hair, sat on a hassock, and read him sheets of written paper all about himself. This went on for two months, when one day she packed her hero's old pants carefully in a multitude of boxes and went off to Italy, taking him with her.

The lad had taken a fancy to something in the china-shop, and his inamorata learned from the maid that it had been purchased at Howell & James'. Your Gusher was in that establishment when the yellow-headed dame came in. Remembering each other's faces, we began to talk of the South Audley pots, and speedily duplicated

a majolica jar that seemed necessary to Ichabod's happiness.

"So you know Ouida?" said the manager, as she left the department.

"*Ouida!*" blurted I. "Which? where? when Ouida?"

"Why, that's the novelist, Louise de la Ramee," explained the man. "She's going to Italy, and has bought lots of things of us to take with her."

Great House of Parliament! I was knocked. I scuttled home as fast as I could and went through the lately deserted rooms looking for souvenirs of the departed novelist—one of the hairpins flung out when she let down her back hair—one of the sheets of written paper she read to her young man—for I had read "Under Two Flags" and was an enthusiast.

Naturally, then, I never let fall an opportunity of learning about Ouida. A year later it was known that a young man, on whom she spent loads of money and lavished lots of love, had used her very badly, and I found that the adolescent calf occupying the pedestal in South Audley Street was the party. Ouida shut herself up with a pack of dogs, and wrote a burning, blazing novel, in which the bare bones of treachery, hypocrisy and deceit were picked with cannibalistic relish.

I forget the name of that work, but you felt as if you'd been lunching in the morgue after you'd read it.

Here comes this "Othmar" with its doctrine of a thirty-year-old hell to be endured by all women.

Her blessed heroines are of two sorts—maddening beauties who fade at thirty and find the world at an end after having had a few glorious years of it, and sweet, lily-like creatures—very brainless—who, exposed to the fascination of some impossible man, die of love for him, while he romps round with the Blowsabella.

There's not the slightest doubt in the minds of those who have tried it, that a man's arms are the greatest things in the line of necklaces yet discovered; that no solitaire known to Tiffany ever gave such satisfaction to the female ear as the lips of a sinful man whispering a fond and beautiful lie into it. I don't say that he doesn't believe it at the time; but it turns out a lie all the same.

But for any chump of a woman to think that when her neck has lost its roundness and she has lost the arm-necklace, that when her ear has lost the pinkness that won the winning tale of love, the game is up, and there's nothing left to live for—that's simple idiocy.

The love of man is a very good thing, but it is not all. When it tumbles out of the nest it doesn't smash all the other eggs.

Ouida says Time "takes everything from a woman and gives her nothing."

It's a blamed no such thing. Time should give her a clearer head, a stouter heart, a braver spirit. It should make life worth the living by giving it constantly increasing knowledge, and by depleting the stock of selfishness with which we all go into business.

It's only to the brainless that Time is a terror. I ask nothing to conquer the evils of age with but something to do, and the ability to do it.

It's a pleasure to watch the world and see how it uses us all. It's a very nice world, not at all made up of Granvilles and Berties and Othmars and Idalias and Napraxines; not at all like Ouida's novels, but a most interesting, delightful place. I know of none better.

LIFE IN A FLAT.

THAT which is everybody's business is nobody's business. Certainly no one attends to it. I would be very glad to hear this morning that a mob of justly indignant citizens had taken the paper-shell builders in hand and were making examples of them at the lamp-posts. In riding up and down the Elevated Railroad I have had an opportunity of seeing a great deal of the building going on uptown, and it's a safe prediction to make, that the Buddensiek accident in a still more dreadful form will occur over and over again.

There is no power would induce me to live in the places where several of my friends hang out in joyous unconcern. In some of my late wanderings I have tarried for the night in æsthetic flats and new hotels. There's a house up Broadway, much patronized by theatrical folks, and with a well-known lady in the profession I have passed a good deal of time there lately. They are hard at work this week papering over the cracks in the walls on the third and fourth stories; but I have studied them and I know what an unsafe barracks it is. The building is very young; in fact, it is teething; but it is cracked from garret to cellar; cracked and re-cracked; clocks on mantels won't go without wedges of champagne corks tucked under to make 'em level on the cracked slabs. Half the doors won't shut; all the corners of the window-mouldings and door-frames have nice little bits of ornamental whirligigs set in them, and

they are falling out in every instance. I wouldn't live in that hotel if they gave me the entire receipts of the house. It's a trap.

Two of my newly married female friends have Queen Anne style of flats. The decorations are delightful. They have a little elevator—two-fat-women wide and one-tall-man high. A little 4-by-9-inch boy, weighed to the earth with a peck of brass buttons, slowly lifts me, when I call on Melancthon and Maria, to the fifth floor. The blamed thing has stuck with me lately between the third and fourth landing. I've discovered the reason. The little shaft has shrunk and the little box has swelled. Bubby carries a bottle of Jacob's Oil, ostensibly for his back, that he says is strained by buttons; but when we strike the third floor I begin to smell it particularly strong, so I know he uses it on the elevator. I read the other day some one's affidavit of the efficacy of this preparation, and the wording satisfied me the patient is a friend of Maria's or Melinda's. "I have been pulled through a very tight place by its use," wrote the man. He's been up in that Hyperion flat-house elevator, sure.

When I am dumped by Buttons at the fifth floor, "I perceive before me," like *Desdemona*, "a divided duty." There's a landing the breadth of a farmer's boot, and two little doors not able to honestly stand side by side, but stuck in like the letter V; the right is Maria's and the left is Melinda's. I go to see Maria usually, because it comes natural for me to do the right thing; but it amounts to the same. I sit in her parlor and I hear Melinda in her kitchen telling the cook that the cold mutton will be good enough for dinner with a can of peas. Wild horses could not drag me in there after that. Between the parlor and the bedroom there's a little plaster tube which runs from the basement to the scuttle. It's for

air—so the builder says. So it is—to air all the dirty linen of the twelve families who live under the roof. I slept with my right ear about a foot away from it one night, and I was heartily sorry for every one of 'em.

Flat No. 1 is occupied by a widow with one son, and he is a loafer. Far into the night that ruffian nagged and threatened his poor mother about a couple of hundred dollars she had received during the day. Flat No. 2 has a jealous wife in it; Flat No. 3, an invalid crank. The third floor contributed one of those nervous housekeepers who can have convulsions if the laundress blues her wash in the wrong tub, and a pair of poker-playing gentlemen. The fourth floor takes a cornet-playing young man as a boarder, and the other family have a daughter who is keeping company with the most demonstrative youth that ever sparked a girl.

This is the sort of thing the tube conducted into my ears for three mortal hours:

"What d'yer want 'er thet money berfore nex' week? Lem-me use 't, will yer? lem-me turn it over? Yer freeze onter yer stamps wuss 'en ever yer did. It's all very well for you to tell me you wasn't out of the office to-day. I've got things fixed so's I know. How comes four pin-holes in your shirt bosom instead of two? I pinned down your Albert scarf this morning, just here. Now look; there's two more holes, an inch and a half away. Oh, you forgot? You did run around to Lafayette Place and have a Turkish bath. Indeed, you're sure it wasn't some other place? When I am gone you will realize what I have suffered. That medicine don't seem to be doing me no good. I think it's a cancer. All great people have cancers—Charlotte Cushman, Charles Sumner, Fanny Fern, Ulysses Grant and me. You know that beef-dripping from yesterday, and every scrap of

that turkey-fat, was sold by that wretched woman for soap-fat this morning. It's enough to put one in their grave. I have endured as much as a martyr with that awful, unprincipled thing. The clothes-wringer is broken, and half the clothes-pins are left on the roof. I raise you ten. What's that? Three queens. Confound the luck! Make this a jack-pot. Give me two. Pass me a match. Well, here goes. I look toward you. Hold on. I come in on that. 'Toot-ee-toot. Toot-ee-toot.' (First bar of Mabel waltz.)

"My sweetest own, I really must—[clinging kiss]. Got to be at the office at nine. How I will think of you all day. And in an hour from now sweet dreams will give you to my waiting arms. Just here I will fancy your little head—put your little head there for a moment. Oh, you darling! I'll kiss you for that." (Sque-e-sch—another one of the old-fashioned kind.)

"If you were to talk all night I could not let you have that money. That's the second yellow hair in a fortnight I've found on your overcoat. In my weak condition—that girl shan't stay in the house another—'Tain't what you hold, it's what you draw. I'll take four this time. Toot, toot-ee-toot! Now, darling, I must go just one real sweet one." (Fearfully elongated kiss.)

Now what do you think of that over and over again for hours?

The closet they dine in is the other side the tube, and a perfect concert of noises accompanies each meal. The fires in those traps always occur in the elevator shaft and start right up it; the stairs are all huddled close to the elevator. If ever there's a flame starts down stairs that loving couple will be fried in their own fat, that poker party will draw their last card, the invalid will find her dream of a coffin realized at last, and the latest

yellow hair will be scorched unknown on the bad husband's overcoat, for the Hyperion Flats will go in the twinkling of an eye. That is its ultimate fate, if it is not rattled down this summer by the blasting of a big rock next door, that it is necessary to remove so another flat-house (the Satyr) may be put up.

PREVALENT PERFUMES.

How happy shall I be when the catarrhal reign of old King Pneumonia and Queen Diphtheria is over! The druggists have expended their invention and nastiest drugs in concocting evil-smelling ammunition with which to repulse the enemy. At the Madison Square, the other night, a dapper man sat beside me who was eating for his cold those diabolical lozenges called "Coldine." There are moments when my friend Caswell, under the Fifth Avenue Hotel, breaks out in the cellar with an odor of assafœtida simply paralyzing; but Caswell's cellar is as a tract of land belonging to "Araby the Blest" compared with the man who chews Coldine lozenges. This patriot emitted during the evening this awful smell every time he spoke, and a woman, with a nose, sat beside him and seemed to be insensible of the dreadful state of her escort.

Directly in front of me was a large, portly woman who warmed up during the evening, and got quite excited, and applauded frantically, and every moment started a flavor of a beautiful plaster she had planted between her shoulders. This was wafted to me continually. During an *entr'acte* a gentleman came down to exchange felicitations with her about the play, and he was redolent of Jacob's Oil and arnica and opodeldoc and a few little things like that. This concert of sweet smells rose in the auditorium like incense, and I made up my mind that the unique nose I have prided myself on so long was more of a nuisance than an ornament.

But the great trial of the evening was to come when an expiring shrimp of a dudelet dropped into a seat on the other side of me. He had read the works of Michelet. That savant, in "La Femme," says it is a woman's duty to make up like a bouquet, to have one perfume for her hair, and another for her hands, and a third special extract from some chosen flower that shall always distinguish her person. The gentle dudelet, feeling his case resembled that of La Femme, had got himself up after this fashion for the theatre. Only, "Sweet spirit hear my prayer!" he had selected those refulgent odors, Ylang-Ylang for his delicate digits, patchouli for his ambrosial bang, and he laid aside a spring overcoat that seemed to be steeped in musk. I could forgive him the Ylang-Ylang and condone the musk, but patchouli is a criminal offence that should have its penalty along with other lesser crimes.

There are persons who can be affected by odors in unpleasant ways. I know one who has a violent headache half an hour after she gets a whiff of patchouli. I am not one of that tender-built brood, but I do get mad over such a concatenation of evil smells as I fell into the other night, and I was telling next day of my sufferings to a mischievous friend.

"Now," said she, "I have a gentleman admirer much given to strong perfumes, and I have hit upon a plan that is working beautifully. I tell him that the foundation of most scents at present is Alkazinine, and that, however charming they are at first, they speedily resolve themselves into this primal factor, which is very unpleasant and unhealthy. I'm a graduate of Vassar, and he regards me as a miracle of learning. I gently dab a little benzine on him somewhere, and he begins to complain of the dreadful smell. 'That's alkazinine,' says I, and

the poor man vows he'll stick to cologne, which won't stick to him long. So you see I am breaking up one man's bad habits."

Hereafter, I think I shall take an atomizer with a little benzine in it to theatres, and contribute to the gang of odors that frequent those places.

Some people look to me like smells, and remind me of plants. I look about a house at a first-night and think in an instant of a variety of things that never grow in a theatre. There's Joe Howard and John Hoey and Tom Doremus. Their polished, egg-like heads always seem to be inviting some old hen to be sitting on them, and instinctively my thoughts run upon barn-yards and Brahma Pootras. The cotton-pod top-knot of Stephen Massett is always accompanied by a vision of a nigger in a hickory shirt just about to pick him. Lancaster looks like a milk pitcher of catnip tea my mother made me drink once. A tailor on the Strand fixed up his window one autumn with pantaloons of mixed tweed goods, and in the top of every pair he had a branch of Scotch heather. I always think of that shop-window when I see Harrington. There's a very fine-looking banker at all first-nights with a magnificently dressed wife. I can always see an invisible label on his back on which is printed "Extract of dandelion and rhubarb." Very nasty to take, but it does you a lot of good. Why should I always associate Madame Ponisi with a bunch of lilacs? I never remember to have seen them together. Yet always beside her, in private life or on the stage, I see a stately bush crowned with nodding branches of purple lilacs, and the odor is as distinct as the vision.

I can readily understand why, in the presence of the Marquis de Leuville, I always thought of Madison

Square Garden and the three rings—because he is the greatest show on earth. But why should I smell copal varnish every time my dear friend Thompson passes me? I know why Willie Winter always reminds me of a clove—because he's little, got a big head, and usually comes into a theatre after a drink. But what on earth makes me think of a yacht every time I see Jim Collier, and smell the salty air from off the sea as he bears down the aisle? Is it because of his breezy way, or on account of that picture a railroad paper got out of him with a sailor hat on? No, it can't be that, because that picture was printed within a year or so, and I've had the yacht under full sail beside Jim ever since I can remember. I wonder if other people have the same associations.

When Charles Foster, the famous medium, was on his legs holding seances in this town, I asked him once how he recognized the spirits he professed to see as related to this or that member of a party sitting at his table, and he said everybody had for him either a color radiating from every outline of their anatomy or an odor that distinguished them; that the degree of relationship between the living and the dead was determined for him by the shade of color or the strength of the odor; that about me he always saw a deep shade of heliotrope. Two or three dead aunts turned up a shade or two lighter. A croupy young cousin, who had a communication from my grandmother, was just faintly tinged, while grandma had the same shade as my aunt, and I hope it was becoming to the dear old lady; it isn't to her granddaughter.

I think I met a woman similarly afflicted with myself on the cars the other day. She had a lad with her, and all of a sudden she broke out with: "I think your Aunt 'Liza will be to home when we get there. I've been

smelling molasses gingerbread all day." Revolving this mysterious utterance, it can only be accounted for in this way. Heaven knows I don't want to expect anybody who is heralded by the smell of Coldine lozenges, and I trust I shan't sit near any more warm porous-plasters.

DOWN EAST.

THE late John Phœnix used to describe some chemical or mechanical process "known only to God Almighty and Mr. Paine, of Worcester, Mass.," and you'll find plenty of men to-day in the Eastern States, who, speaking of their partnership with Providence in some great work, say "I and God." This good opinion of self is not confined to the male animal. I think for genuine conceit, insufferable importance and rank airs, a journey to Boston is the quickest way to get the greatest quantity of female idiocy I know of.

It begins at Hartford. The Hartford woman is quite a departure from the New York article. At that place the incipient crank sets in; at Springfield it takes on a deeper shade, and at Worcester it rages with true Bostonian virulence.

The doughy complexion, the eye-glasses, the scientific assertiveness of the Beantown woman are all there. I had occasion to stop a night at Worcester at the Bay State House, and I don't know when I have been so much amused.

Time was when the *Atlantic Monthly* was the correct periodical for Yankee consumption, but it seems to be superseded by the *Century*. The æsthetic cover has something to do with its popularity, and it looks well; its bizarre back and wild lettering have an air of intellect. The December number was just published, and I think seven out of every ten Worcester women were taking *Centuries*.

Dinner occurs near the centre of the day down East, and at six and later they take a nondescript meal called a supper-tea. Hot griddle-cakes have the call at this feed. They must cook a thousand cakes every night at that Bay State Home.

The pasty-looking ladies of that hotel meandered down about seven with their *Centuries*, adjusted their glasses—it's incompatible with intellect to have good eyesight—and opened on cakes and syrup. I sat opposite a most aggravated specimen of the genus.

A putty-complexioned woman, who set her *Century* up against a milk-pitcher, bent her eyes on a chapter concerning "Molecular Circumspection," and blindly shovelled in the cakes. A passage of great abstruseness would absorb her. She would pause in the good work and abstractedly poise a forkful of buckwheat and molasses in mid air; recover, and feed herself with a gulp. She was simply fascinating. I couldn't leave off watching her. I asked the waiter if the funerals from indigestion took place in the house, or if they sent the bodies home to the friends. And he told me the cakes were not immediately fatal. They generally lingered long enough to pay their bills and leave.

A certain class of sporting people have, with a few exceptions, passed away. Such horsemen as Hiram Woodruff, such old sports as Tom Battelle, are long ago dead; but in Worcester there lives a patriot named "Pug" Wesson, in whose muscular frame and rollicking face glow the fire and fun that made the sports of the olden time vastly superior to the specimens of the present day. Take the Dwyer brothers of this racing period and the Golden brothers of the Mystic Park. There isn't a horsehair on their heads. They could call on the Episcopal Advent Conference and pass themselves off as

country clergymen, so unlike turfmen are they in appearance. But you take Wesson and put him into clerical black, with a white choker and gold-rimmed spectacles, a volume of Watts' hymns in one hand and Scott's Commentary in the other—you would never ask him where the text was going to be, but sing out at once : "Hello, old sport, what's this disguise worn for?"

He's horsey, he's doggy, he's fighty, he's bully, from his iron-grey cropped head to his active feet. He's a record of the turf and ring, when there was a turf and ring. It's a pleasure to sit in the little old-fashioned bar and talk over real sporting times opposite a fine steel engraving of Heenan taken before he went to Europe, and surrounded by quaint old colored prints of race-courses, the Epsom and the Derby, and lithos of the famous mares Flora Temple and Lady Suffolk.

Yes, amid the bean-baking, cake-eating citizens of Worcester, there are some very good things in the way of men. I heartily enjoy their companionship, but I'm mighty glad to get back to New York. We're a very human gang here, and mighty few of us are troubled with cranks, or strain ourselves to make an impression. To have a good time seems to be about the size of our usual aspirations. Putting on airs is a business that occupies a very slim number of the community.

AT THE INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION.

THE supremacy and the idiocy of man are nowhere so strongly demonstrated during the year as at the Autumn Industrial Exhibition. I go up and look at the crunching machines for eating cobblestones, and the Goliath looms for weaving wire fences, and I feel like leaning up against the first old man as a sick kitten does against the kitchen stove. Then I strike an old pump with a patent unbreakable corset-steel, or a healthy idiot with a needle-threader, and I want to scalp him as he stands.

The man who invents an article to meet a necessity of his fellow-creatures, and the man who invents something to enable him to provide for his own necessities, are two distinct animals. I wandered about the Sixty-third Street establishment one evening, and out of the hundreds of inventions I didn't see more than a dozen that I wouldn't have been ashamed to have fathered or mothered, as the case may be. A variety of men have come to the conclusion that a portable Russian bath is one of the stern necessities of our checkered existence. One Teutonic individual has evolved a chiffonnier that opens, takes apart, comes down, spreads out and takes in till it assumes the proportion of a vapor bath. A seat is hung in, a lamp screwed on, a flap turned up, your head stuck through, and after a week of preparation, along about Sunday, if you are industrious and have good luck, you can take a bath at home about half as well as you can abroad.

A Yankee got to thinking out the same problem. He took the regular old tub and ran in a pipe at the side, perforated with holes to keep up a spray inside, and he hung over the top a rubber sort of a counterpane with a hole in it where you were to come through while you sat up in the bath. Over your shoulders you are to wear a sort of campaign cape, such as the Plumed Knights sport, and all you need is a torch to complete you for a political boomer. I can't think of a more senseless pair of inventions, except it be the sanitary efforts of a lot of old chumps to wring money out of you for traps to make your sewer-gas reach you with more ceremony than it will if left to its own way. One dear old gentleman has originated a glass bulb that seems calculated to show up any impurities in the gas, and to prove to you, if you watch it, that you get a full supply.

I suppose a year ago I should have said that there were no more ways of building a surprise bed unless you elaborated my idea of a combination stepladder, churn and bed that I thought out last winter. But now at the Industrial I stumbled upon an innocent fire-place. The mantel was draped with plush, and on its shelf rested a variety of bisque and majolica ornaments. In the midst was a framed picture of Henry Ward Beecher, and his features were wreathed with theological smiles as he gazed at the well-filled trunks of a Parian marble bather about to take a header. The ancient inventor of this surprise party whisked away the plush lambrequins and looked me in the eye to watch the general effect. There was a clash of springs, a sound as if Belva Lockwood was chuckling over an electoral vote, and down before my astonished eyes dropped a ready-made bed.

"Now, then," said I, "what becomes of the cannel-coal fire in the grate?" And then I was told the grate

must be like the stove of Col. Sellers—an affair of red glass and a candle. I fairly tore myself away from this ingenious invention that seemed to promise a still further change of base, and was fascinated by the ugliness of two old hens who were rivals in advertising dress-cutting systems.

One of these monstrosities had yards of cloth checked off into sections to be scissored out and sewn together and warranted to fit the slimmest or fattest female in the city. The other was a system comprising a square compass—one of those wooden things with glass phials of water bedded in 'em and a pair of dividers. I never saw so much machinery, and all to accomplish so small an object. A hay-cutter hasn't so many attachments and movements as this dress-cutter, and the unearthly ugliness of the woman who tended the machine drove me wild with delight.

"Now," said I to her, with a view to having a little fun out of my evening, "I have just been at the booth of a Mr. Palmer, who has a lovely face-powder, and with great stupidity that man has provided himself with a very plain young lady as assistant. If he had only secured a lady with your complexion and features, the success of a cosmetic used by a person so beautiful would be assured."

That blind old female pill simpered and smiled, and took it all in like an evening breeze. I tell you, my gentlemen friends, if you ever want to say a sweet thing for any base purpose to an ugly woman, and hang back because you think there isn't enough worm on your hook, fling her out; it's something wonderful how they will catch on. I thought there was money in gambling that I'd be snubbed for my outrageous kidding. Not for an instant. She smiled on me like a Cheshire cat, and said she had noticed that girl and thought Palmer was stand-

ing in his own light. And I nearly burst with laughter as I crawled away and fell on dear Father Fairbanks' scales and found I weighed a hundred and sixty pounds, which was a rough awakening from a dream I had of being æsthetic and fragile.

Passing a lot of nicely assorted doors, set in good solid frames, I saw a glass pane lettered, "Almost human intelligence." This was a condition I had been seeking in the blessed monkey up at the Park, and Jo-Jo, the dog-faced boy, in the Bowery. So I stopped and investigated it. On each door was a brass tube, and you could take that door and give it a bang like one of Macy's shop-girls, and it would go on a dead run till within five inches of the jamb, when, as if arrested by a human hand, it would gently, but firmly and noiselessly, go quite shut. This is a boon to mankind. So many people dwell in an atmosphere of clashing doors that this invention will prove a God-send. And if this brass tube can only be put on some young men I know it will effect a revolution. It lays a firm hand on a fellow when he has gone just far enough, and brings him up with a round turn. It checks him in his mad career, and gently shuts the door on him in a manner not to be denied. It's a daisy, and I ordered a gross to be sent down to me at once.

"What is home without a mother?" sang a chicken to me, from an incubator. It knew more about it than I did, and so I told it, though I stopped and looked into the business that seemed to have robbed a hen of half the pleasure of life. I wish I could have presented that scene to the north eye of a speckled Dorking I know in Connecticut, who is always laying on my remorseful soul. It was my business to chase and duck and drench that unhappy fowl when she made a nest and began to sit, as she would on a china door-handle. If her fond heart

could be made to understand that a little cotton-wool and a handful of charcoal could do the weary work of weeks in a few mechanical days, she would think less hard of me ; and, by George ! I never wilfully injured the feelings of a hen.

To turn from life to death is a much shorter step than one thinks. I withdrew my fascinated gaze from a shell through which a ragged little chick was dazedly picking, and was confronted by a new thing in gravestones. Of a properly unhealthy color, something like an air-tight stove in its shape, there stood a number of white zinc monuments and headstones. "Sacred to the memory of Piltha Anee, etc.," I read in the place of Excelsior, or Eureka, or Radiator. The noble inventor had got ahead of me. I did intend to file a caveat this week on my Aunt Susan's raised biscuits. As a material for tombstones they are vastly superior to white zinc. It is a discouragement to death and should be opposed by the undertakers—this new idea in gravestones. Let intending suicides go up to Sixty-third Street and see those monuments. It will reconcile them to life and disgust them with the consequences of their crime. Let them be told that all suicides will have zinc headstones erected over 'em, and it will do more to stop the practice than making it a misdemeanor punishable with imprisonment.

I noticed with pleasure a falling off in the number of scroll-saws usually exhibited, and a consequent diminution in those remarkable racks and frames and toy rocking-chairs produced by them. There are not as many coffee pots dispensing samples of their productions as there should be, and that pleasant person who had a waffle-iron in operation every evening at last year's show is not with us this fall. Perhaps he found the exhibition unprofitable. Women used to walk round, get a waffle

with their cloak on their arm ; put their cloak on and go get a waffle ; turn it the furry side out and go get a waffle ; hand it to a friend, look cross-eyed and go get a fourth waffle out of the confused baker.

Poor man ! I pitied him almost as much as I do Pursell. I often watch the sweet-scented old dames who patronize his Broadway establishment. They go across from Lord & Taylor's and Arnold & Constable's at two o'clock lunch time. Pursell sets out a counter loaded with all kinds of cakes. One of those fine ladies with a coach and two men on the box outside will eat her way 'round the store. I have seen one devour four cream cakes, a bun, five chocolate éclairs, two meringues and a doughnut, and placidly point out with a sapphire-like finger three modest ginger-snaps and one cooky as the extent of her lunch, pay four cents and walk out with a dollar's worth of truck in her wicked old stomach.

Up at the fair it's the same way. A woman way up in society, rich enough to buy up the building, paid twenty-five cents in my presence the other night for a little tin box of something to remove dirt from all fabrics, and she put one box in her pocket, another in the hands of her attendant, and took the third from the unsuspecting man who wrapped it up for her.

Said I, " Will that stuff remove all unpleasant substances from clothes ? "

" It will," said the man—" grease, pitch, paint, varnish ; it will extract any unpleasant substance from the clothes."

" Then," said I, " chuck a bucketful on that old woman, and we'll have her dancing in a flannel petticoat here while the band plays the ' Rogue's March.' "

A REAL HOME FOR THE AGED.

It's very seldom you see a Jew beggar, for that race takes care of its own in the noblest fashion. The hospitals, the magnificent orphan asylums, and the various homes their charity keeps going, nurture and protect the sick, the poor and the old so thoroughly that only occasionally do you see a Jew in need.

I went to the Jewish Home for the Aged recently, and my earnest recommendation to all my friends is to get in proper condition at once for admission to that institution. You have got to embrace the faith and be sixty years old at least—that's all for us girls, and in return see what you get: A nice bed in a commodious room in a fine, large, luxurious house; five meals a day; three suits of clothes; a half-pint of whiskey for every twenty-four hours; all you can smoke; wine two days in the week for dinner, and beer two days; a couple of hundred pounds of the best coffee made for you every month; a two hours' outing every day, and once in two weeks a whole day, and twenty-five cents for car fare, if you have friends you care to visit.

Mr. Haine, the superintendent, told me many amusing stories of his experience with the one hundred and fifty aged people he has to look after up at 105th Street. A very old Polish Jew applied for admission lately. The very first thing they do with new-comers is to bathe 'em no matter how clean they may be. This old patriarch was in a frightful condition.

"In you'll go to the bath three times," thought Mr. Haine, as he deliberated which part of the open lot in the rear he should use to burn the Jew's raiment, when it came off.

He led the way to the bath-room, but at its door the dirty old Pole revolted. He would not be washed. The superintendent explained that it was a rule—an imperative condition of his admission.

"I have lived eighty years without taking a bath, and I won't begin with a foolish custom at my time of life," said the Pole, and he picked up his bundle and trudged off.

But Mr. Haine has got one hundred and fifty clean old men and women polished up till they shine. They have nothing to do but keep themselves in order, and they fairly glisten. The order issued by the directors of this institution to those having it in charge, is to make the inmates happy. The filial affection of the Hebrew race is exceptional, and in their management of this place the love they bear their own fathers and mothers crops up. "Make those lonely old creatures comfortable. Do for them as we would wish some one would do for our parents if we were not on earth to care for them," said a Jewish lady connected with the Board of Directors; and that is the rule on which the place is run.

If there is such a person in the world as a rich man or woman who has found the married estate comfortable, do let him or her endow an asylum for aged married people. The Christians have no such place. Now, the distinctive feature of the splendid institution on 105th Street is this: it does not part the Sarahs and Abrahams who have journeyed through the shadows of poverty together and reached their hospitable doors hand in hand. No, thank God! The poor old withered hands are not unclasped. They are assigned their room, where everything is kept

in a state of delightful cleanliness. The two little three-quarter beds stand close and lovingly together. The two big easy rockers each side of the polished plate glass window have only a little stand between them, handy for granny's knitting and grandpa's pipe. Their troubles are past, their future assured, they are in that blessed Home where nothing will ever part them till that unseen, viewless hand that is reaching slower or faster for every one of us is laid in undenying summons on one or the other. As I looked at couple after couple who had reached this haven of rest, I felt my heart swell with thankfulness to those wise, generous people who have fostered this charity.

Is there anything sadder than the fate of a man and wife who have stuck together till they are old and feeble, to be separated at the last?

"I'll take care of father," said a man to me one day, "if mother will go and live with my sister."

That man thought he had sat down on a hornet's nest when I began in my wrath to abuse him for his intentions.

An old wife misses the daily growl with the old man. She needs the bother his superior foolishness occasions. She would be lost without the care he is and always was to her. No, God bless 'em! If the people love each other long enough to reach helpless old age together, keep 'em together, ye sons and daughters, if you have to take in washing or go out sawing wood to do it.

Somewhere in heaven there is a saint whose name on earth was Leo. She founded this asylum, on Seventeenth Street, years ago, that now flourishes on 105th Street to-day. I went and looked at the noble face of this noble woman in a picture, and took her features well to heart, that I may call on her the first thing after I climb the golden stairs.

I'm all the while thinking what I shall do when I get to heaven. Its resources, as set forth in the pulpit, are not very extensive. They understand the requirements of woman, I have no doubt. That verse stating that there is no "marrying or giving in marriage" shows conclusively that terrestrial affairs have guided their management of celestial ones, and we girls are going to have a much better thing hereafter than we have had heretofore. But that other statement, "they toil not, neither do they spin," alarms me. As a cherub, of course I can't sit 'round, and how I'm going to exist without occupation puzzles me to say. I remember, when a child, having a long talk on this subject with old Aunt Hannah, as industrious a woman as ever lived.

"I dunno, child," said she. "Parsons is onsartin on that pint; but I want them knitting needles put alongside me in my coffin, partly becos I may get a chance to use 'em, an' partly becos I don't want 'em spiled by the gals pickin out nuts wid 'em."

A year after Hannah took her last stitch, and all the neighbors' children went over to see the faithful old colored servant who had been our confidante and adviser in many a tough time. I looked at the knotted black fingers clasped on her bosom. Some one had put a few white flowers in them, but they didn't look natural. I went to the broken work-basket in the corner of the room, where Aunt Hannah's knitting lay as she had dropped it. A half-finished little red stocking for the youngest child was set up on the needles. I stuck the ball of worsted on the points and put the whole business in Aunt Hannah's hands in place of the white blossoms, which were laid beside her wrinkled cheek.

An instant after this alteration was made the members of the family came in, and one after the other they broke

down as they looked at the knitting work going to heaven in Hannah's hands, and realized the stockings they were losing. And Joel Hawes, the parson of the period, took the knitting needles for a text and preached a sermon on faithful servitude and the wages paid for it in Zion that was unusual for its tenderness and sympathy.

Hannah was planted, needles and all, for I explained I had carried out one of her last requests. And when Gabriel calls all up to begin, the little red stocking will long ago have dropped from the rusty needles, but those four wires in her bony grip will tell the story of her life-long, loving industry ; and if there's any knitting in heaven Hannah will get in her graft and show 'em what a Connecticut colored woman can do.

THE PLAN OF THE BOOMERANG.

I HAVE been observing Professor Gleason and his methods, and I come to the conclusion that his is the most successful form of government for man as well as beast. The introduction of that cunning little upper-lip strap that yanks half the wearer's head off when he hoists his heels would make the marital condition twice blessed.

The plan of the boomerang is the one on which to build a happy home. Once let a man know that the stone he throws will come back and break his own head, and bricks will soon cease to fly. If you mend your husband's trousers with pins, you won't be sat on in a hurry. Let these men once learn that to make things unpleasant for you will be to hurt themselves, dear women, and you've got the pull. The family horse will come down to a safe and easy gait and double harness will not be such a dreadful thing to go in.

Gleason takes a vicious brute, warranted to kick the liver pin out of every one who handles him. He slips on the persuader and invites him to use his heels. The first aggressive movement brings all the straps and pulleys into action. Mr. Horse thinks he's scalped ; he knows some one has tried to break his jaw, and he looks out for his enemy. The instant he understands he's kicking the top of his own head off, his kicking days are over. Yes, dear girls, adopt the Gleason method of control and your comfort is assured.

I knew a man not many years ago—balky, bad-tempered, a chronic kicker. His record was fast, but nothing he had ever done justified the opinion he had of his own speed. That he was put on earth to show his points and paces and never to draw a pound, he firmly believed. It fell to one unhappy woman's fate to handle this lad, and a lively time she had of it. She never knew where she was, nor what was going to happen. He had more moods and tenses than a High School grammar. Gentleness, kindness, persuasion were thrown away, and the poor woman was discouraged. But one day she was taught a lesson by an old market-woman. It was over in New Jersey, and Aunt Hannah had a horse as stubborn as a mule. There was no getting that nag to do a straightforward thing. It took the old lady three hours to go half a mile, owing to an infernal trick the horse had of backing. He would leave the stable, setting off as if his destination was the object of his life ; but at the first hill he settled back against the dashboard and began the return trip with the wagon on his wrong end.

Hannah worked faithfully with mild "ge-yeps" and "hud-ups" and persuasive pulls at the reins. She would climb out and lead him a rod. He'd go two more on his own account, and then back a quarter of a mile.

One day the old lady saw a neighbor coating the top of his fence with strips of tin that bristled with gleaming rows of tacks. A bright thought struck her. If the cats were opposed to a little strip of this invention, what couldn't she effect with a square yard of it !

That day saw a coat of mail put on the front of the old market wagon. Aunt Hannah bought a big piece of cat-dissuader and nailed it carefully where it would do the most good. Bucephalus was hitched up and went off, as

usual, in fair style. At the usual hill the usual business occurred. Mr. Nag settled back with a mighty bump. He struck the invention and a galvanic shock streaked up his spinal column to his ears. Of course, he didn't think he did it himself to himself. After a mile or two he tried it again, and finally it struck him that backing was unpleasant business and he held to his course like a lamb.

Maria saw this operation, and it comforted and sustained her with new hope. The virtue of tacks and tin had never occurred to her before. She went home determined on a new line of action. She began a most aggressive life. She dealt the kicker a dose of his own medicine, and she kept it up for awhile ; but, being of a loving nature, enjoying peace, this warfare was unpleasant. She went over to Jersey to see if tacks and tin were permanent reformers, and she met a hearse coming from Aunt Hannah's door. The old woman was undergoing the process of planting.

" She died of disappointment," said a neighbor. " You heard how she got round that balky horse ? "

Maria said she had seen the whole thing.

" Well," continued the historian, " for a month she had the upper hand ; but one morning she drove out of the barn in a more than usually triumphant manner. She reached that hill, and never in her life did she get such a setback. It landed her on her beam-end. Down went Bucephalus against the dash-board ; what cared he for tacks any more ? Aunt Hannah crawled up and looked over—the balky brute gave a horse-laugh, flung up his tail and showed the astonished old lady a piece of sheet-iron neatly riveted on under it. She fell back paralyzed as the sheet-iron and the tacks came together like a pair of cymbals. Some said the collision injured

her spine; but I know it was disappointment she died of," concluded the neighbor.

Maria crept back, like a bird with a broken wing, to her nest. She took in the tacks. Ichabod should never, on her account, shingle himself with sheet-iron. She would at least save herself from a death by disappointment. There was safety in flight, and when the balky one came home to his oats, he found an oat that told him to kick to all eternity; he could never do that one lone woman any more harm.

This little story should not discourage you, girls. Go and study Gleason, and see how the thing can be done—with a little nerve and a little strap.

A STUDY OF BALD HEADS.

I HAVE been making a study of bald heads lately, and a very interesting branch of science it is.

There are the bald heads submissive and the bald heads defensive.

There are the rosy, hearty, jolly fellows, scudding along under bare polls, and the indignant, sour old pumps who have taken up arms against the fine-tooth comb of Time, who clutch at their few remaining hairs and utter curses, not loud but deep, at the damnation of their taking off.

These are the men given to devices and self-deceits (they never cheat anybody but themselves). They create a parting in that unexpected region close to the rim of their ears which should be like Canaan's shore, where we part no more. They take the forty-seven hairs thus accumulated and make a thin layer, one hair thick, and diffuse it with mucilage over the bald skull. Then ensue the splits.

There was dear Tom Stewart, who was once a Senator, and afterward lawyer for the Gilsey estate, whose carefully-arranged top-dressing used to crack and exhibit the bumps of Deuteronomy to the admiring fellow that sat behind him.

There's an addled ticket-speculator who owns a blue coat and brass buttons, a No. 10 pair of dead white kid gloves, and the regulation forty-seven top hairs. He reserves for himself a seat in the front row for all the

Patti nights. He brings in a bouquet in a paper overcoat ; he carefully feels of the delusive hirsute veil that disguises his veneration, and he waits for the first important *aria*. Then he rises, fires his floral feelings, waves a pocket-handkerchief, cries "Brava" in the key of D (Mierzwinzki's top note), sits down and puts his hands on the apex of his identity. Ye gods ! his emotion has produced a split. His Fowler & Wells is visible, and he rushes for the *foyer*, and in some secluded place, with a pocket-comb, he renovates himself.

I always feel sorry for the man whose capillary possessions go off as our sable muffs do, in spots, when the moths get into 'em. Now, when my blessed skye-terrier got under the nose of a boiling and overflowing tea-kettle, and the hot water took off a patch of hair the size of a 94-cent dollar, I tied a rose-colored ribbon about the root of his tail and hid his loss beneath a rosette bow. This remedy is denied to man, and I can hardly blame him when he glues a little hair pen-wiper upon the spot where Nature has unkindly treated him. (This forgiveness does not extend to the careless gentleman in row E at the theatre the other night, who, in the convulsions of a well-executed sneeze, deposited a little mat of hair in my lap which left an aperture in his shining locks for all the world like a cyclopean eye looking for its lost blinder.)

Then there's the eccentric bald head, where every feather falls save on one fruitful bit of soil. This top-knot is one of unfailing delight to me—the wee tuft that thrives on an oasis in the desert gives such a low-comedy cut to the severest class of face.

I read the other day the affidavits of several well-known men in behalf of some hair-compelling remedy, and it struck me, in view of Thomas' head, that Professor Doremus as a recommender was a very neat and

cheerful thing. There's a man to whom every avenue of chemistry and medicine is open. If there is a wile by which a hair can be lured from its lair, certainly Dr. Doremus knows it. Now look at his young son Thomas—why, his head and Billy Birch's look in an audience like a pair of roc's eggs in the parent nest!

Has it ever occurred to you, reflective *Mirror*, that baldness is associated with the name of Joseph? The baldest head that ever surmounted the difficulty we call man is that worn by Joseph Polk. The lamented Judge Joe Dowling had another. Joe Coburn is running around town with a neat hairless disk mapped out on top of him. Joseph Proctor has nothing between him and heaven when his hat is off. I believe Mrs. Potiphar would never have laid hold of the original Joseph by his under-clothing if he had had a lock of hair available for detaining purposes. And look at Joseph Howard! The baldness and polish of that Shakespearean head are beyond description. I saw a fly make an appointment with his lady-love to meet on Joe Howard's bump of veneration. What was the result? The old girl got there first—she usually does—slipped up, slid off and broke both her hind legs. The hero arrived next, lost his balance, undertook to walk off on Joseph's ear instead of his own, broke his back, and there was ended one of the sweetest little love episodes of the past summer.

Now all these bald-headed facts are public property. I'm going to disclose a discovery I have lately made that rendered me sleepless and alarmed my friends, who feared it would be temporary. *There are as many bald women as bald men!*

One day on Sixth Avenue I wandered into a mysterious bureau for the renovating and general repairing of females. I represented that I had a much dilapi-

dated aunt who needed fixing up, and I found a very jolly woman, who presently got to laughing heartily at the diagnosis of my relative's case. Then we became confidential. She showed me some hair-standing inventions for the improvement of the human form, and dwelt with persuasive eloquence on a new front of her own manufacture. One after the other, customers dropped in in pursuit of this marvellous front. She had an end of the room screened off by several curtains, behind which the trying on was done.

"I'd like to tend shop an hour or so, and get a further insight into the front business that's carried on in the back," said I.

Now, Madame was fascinated by my winning ways, and replied "that I might if I chose." In two seconds I had my hat off, my coat hung up, a large blue apron pinned over my dress, and, armed with a comb, I began to stir up boxes of scalplocks and switches as if I'd been in the hair trade since the war of 1812.

Two women came in. One of them is conspicuous in society for her profuse silver hair. She disappeared behind the curtain with Madame. I seized a box of hairpins and dashed fearfully in after them. The customer removed a strawberry-colored hat created with particular reference to "that lovely silver hair." She unhooked a mysterious rubber cord; she took out a young herd of invisible hairpins, while Madame tenderly dandled a structure of waved and puffed white hair designed for her use. Then I turned to watch the other's operations, when—O, transformation scene in a Christmas pantomime!—there stood the dame, picked as clean as a goose on a market stall. A little fuzz stuck up here and there; but from the front clear back to the centre of her head she was as bald as any Joseph in the batch!

I fell over on a friendly chair and spilled all the hairpins. Madame said: "Maria, you ain't well. I guess the holidays is too much for you."

So, saying "I think I'll go sit by the stove and get a little air," I crept out.

Then in bounced the wife of a prominent jeweler on Broadway—a tall, lean woman with a good deal of black, shiny hair inside a fishwife hat.

"I want to see one of those Langtry fronts," she said. A girl stepped forward to wait on her. I picked out a lovely snarl of brown curls, and, smiling like a Cheshire cat, took this customer in hand myself.

"That's not a match for my hair," said the customer.

"No," I blandly responded; "but it would suit your fair complexion so well that it would be worth while making your hair match this front." The lady hesitated. I glanced at the name on the wrapper of a bottle behind me, and continued: "Two applications of our celebrated Drury Lane ["Ameoline," whispered the attendant] would bring your head up to the proper shade."

"I've a good mind to try that front on," said the lady.

I seized her muff and umbrella and whisked that woman behind one of the curtains quicker 'n a wink. We had that hat off, and then the embankment of black hair thrown up in front. Great Scott! I had unearthed another Joseph. Her skull fairly gleamed at me.

"Your hair is pretty thin on top," said I, desiring to flatter her. "Yes," said she, "I wear those false pieces to *rest my part*."

My head struck the surbase as I shook the house with a heavy back fall, carried clean off my feet by this last remark. I lay on a sofa in the outside room, while a dozen customers came and went, when I was roused to immediate action by the well-known voice of a friend who

has worn her hair in a bang with a bow on top for a year past. I climbed up and followed Madame and my intimate, whom I will call Louise, because that is not her name. They disappeared into one cubby-hole, while I took the one next door.

Louise explained that she "wanted something to look natural and obviate the necessity of wearing any ornament to hide the meeting." These were her mysterious words. By this time I was on a chair and looking over the top of the partition. Louise took off her feather turban, unpinned that everlasting ribbon bow she loved so, picked up a beautiful fringe of hair that was bandaged on by an invisible net, and, horror on horror's head! she was as bald as a billiard ball!

The concussion was heard in the street. They say the chair can be mended. I have been put together, and bodily may call myself mended. Mentally I am much broken, and it's doubtful if I am ever again the same Giddy Gusher.

THE GREEN PAPER BOX.

THERE is no place like the express office to study the home-made bundle in its native enormity. There are bundles and bundles. There's the symmetrical package that the deft hands of the tradesman sends home. But there's the dear old bundle from home that comes by express to you at Christmas. Seven kinds of string knotted together hold Aunt Hannah's knit socks and mother's mince-pie in sweet communion. It is neither square, round, nor octagonal, the home-made bundle, but it's a daisy all the same, and represents all the loving kindness this earth holds for its poor human creatures.

There are two things in this world I honestly respect —the home-made bundle and the green paper box. I believe every woman has a green paper treasure box—an insecure receptacle for the collected trophies of the changeful years.

The average human being begins the box business at ten. Armless dolls and scraps of broken tea-pots fill it up to that age. Most children hold the belief I did, that pistols grew to be guns and enjoyed an old age of cannons; that my father's watch would in middle life be a family clock, and later on retire to a church steeple; that my beloved brother's roundabout would put out tails as it grew up, and in the form of a surtout or overcoat would finish a life of usefulness.

Believing this, how can children forsake broken toys? So the babies treasure one of this kind till school tickets

and rewards of merit and pretty crochet patterns give place to pink-tinted notes signed Charlie, and withered rose-buds and a cheap little ring with a yellow stone in it. Then the green paper box undergoes a house-cleaning, and clippings from newspapers of sentimental poetry, and pictures of adolescent young men and a love-letter or so take possession of the receptacle.

This class of treasures generally holds the fort till the twenty-year-old girl is forty. The inevitable friction fluctuates; now it is side whiskers, and now it is not. About the time the woman of the box is forty it begins to hold a bang-up pair of eye-glasses, a copy of "Over the River," "Beautiful Snow," and recipes for sugar gingerbread; then tickets to a fair to which the old lady didn't go, and an old silver thimble as full of holes as a sieve.

And later on come the treasures at which one cannot laugh. The old green paper box is broken now, and numberless white cotton stitches hold the bottom and sides together. The hands that tremblingly untie the faded ribbon that binds it are wrinkled and withered; the dim eyes peering fondly within can scarce see for blinding tears the treasures lying within. In the yellow paper there's a lock of hair of the dear side-whiskered Adonis that waltzed into her affections forty years ago; but that's the least valuable of the mementos. Side by side with a boy's top lies a tiny creased stocking—the swell of the fat leg is in it yet, but the little foot that shaped it has wandered far from the quiet paths of home. In one corner lies a bunch of withered flowers. Will the anguish of the hour in which she first saw them ever fade from her suffering heart? It was a woman's thoughtfulness that took them from the pulseless breast of her dead boy in a foreign land and sent them to the bereaved mother.

There's a rusty, blackened penny and a school ticket in another corner. From the ticket the bad marks have long been washed away by tears. These relics were found in Johnny's little pants pocket, when Johnny, without his little trousers, went swimming in Boston Bay and never was heard from again—that's twenty years ago. I find I've been recounting to you the contents of Aunt Sally's box, and I may as well go on and relate the sequel.

One bitter December day, the last of a cheerless year for her, Aunt Sally had opened the box, tenderly touched all her treasures, sighed over the stocking, and dropped a tear on the grave flowers. She picked up the blackened penny, Johnny's one bit of filthy lucre, and reverently kissed it. Johnny was her youngest, and a merry elf; she could never feel quite sure he was dead, though twenty years had elapsed since the accident in Boston Harbor.

Aunt Sally was all alone but for the married daughter in Connecticut with whom she lived. The old green box was carefully tied, and far into the evening the old woman sat and nursed her treasures and memories of the past till the necessity of darning stockings for her unruly grandchildren brought out her specs and put away the box.

Aunt Sally had a hard time with growing, ill-mannered youngsters and a hulking son-in-law, and on this New Year's eve her dependent and forlorn condition came home to her with such strength that she couldn't see through the tear-stained glasses to thread her needle.

When of a sudden the maid-of-all-work came in to announce that a strange gentleman wanted to see her.

"Wants to see my daughter, you mean," said the old lady.

"No; he's none of our town folks. He's come to see you—Mrs. Sally Cheney."

And so Aunt Sally got up and took off her apron and laid her specs on the green box, and courtesyed bashfully to a tall, strong man who stood in the "best room" waiting her.

"Did you want to see me, Mrs. Sally Cheney?" said she.

"I do," answered the man.

"What for?" asked Aunt Sally.

"Because you are Mrs. Sally Cheney. I am your son Johnny who was lost in Boston Harbor twenty years ago!"

And so the little old creature was gathered to his breast and heard how the wicked Johnny went sailing off in a Chinese junk that lay in the bay these many years ago; and how he had made a fortune out of Ah Sin; and how at last he thought of home and mother, and so this New Year guest made of her sad life a joyful one, and changed an existence of bitter dependence to a brick house in Boston with white window shutters tied with black ribbon.

ASA FARWELL'S CHERRY.

THERE are occasions on which I should like to be present, and I am just now hoping fervently I may be permitted to witness the meeting between the Lord and Mr. E. T. Thompson of Indianapolis. It's not enough for me that I read he has been violently thrown to the ground by some lawyer out there. I hunger to see him handed down on a pitchfork to the quarters to which by nature and acquired ability he belongs.

I can understand how a decent, well-behaved man (allowing, for the sake of the argument, there is such an article) can be suddenly demoralized by some dreadful discovery of infidelity at home; but how it lies in any man's boots to coolly, calmly work on a wretched woman's feelings—beleaguer, deceive, draw on to destruction, an unhappy wife and mother who had erred and suffered, acknowledged, confessed, entreated mercy, and lay broken at his feet, I can't make out.

Unfortunate Mrs. Thompson! She accepted the false theory that man's position is on the judgment seat. She begged for mercy; she sued for forgiveness—she got treachery, insult and abuse till she went and committed suicide, leaving behind her a lot of letters so full of abject, pitiful misery that even other men are pointing the finger of scorn and turning down the thumb of condemnation at the wretch. The papers say he is in the last stages of consumption. Take away his cod-liver oil and let him spend the last afternoons thinking up the subject. That

desperately suffering soul confessed over and over her one dereliction from the path of virtue. Why didn't she brace up and ask E. T. Thompson for a small confession of twenty-hornet power? Why, instead of leaving this earth on his account, she would be to-day thanking heaven that he wouldn't speak to her.

I remember that once on a time an old fellow in my native town named Farwell invented a sweet, seductive fluid that worked on the inner man, or inner woman, with such dire effect that straightway he unbuttoned his soul and aired that which was worst within him. Asa Farwell's Cherry was the name of this cordial, and wild cherries and French brandy entered largely into its composition.

Well, there was a strait-laced, sanctimonious old pump, whom we will call Comstock, and he had a pretty, frivolous wife, of whose conduct he was ridiculously jealous. They got a gallon of Farwell's Cherry into the house and sampled it on Sunday night. I was a kid of ten years, but I enjoyed the sight of old Pop Comstock getting very lush on Farwell's Cherry.

"Now, acknowledge, Myra," said he, "that you flirted last summer with Dr. ——, and that you were off sleighing with him last week when you said you sat up with Miss Middleton's little boy with the measles."

And Myra, with Farwell's confession-fluid on board, got up and confessed, and during the confession I filled Pop Comstock's glass twice. My dear friend Myra was weeping dismally on the sofa when I dosed Pop for the third time.

"I'm sure I meant no wrong," bleated Myra, "and you'll forgive me, won't you, darling?"

Pop's features were fixed in a Spartan expression of unforgiveness, but of a sudden the last dose of Farwell did the business. He broke down into a maudlin state

of sloppiness. He confessed hired girls, and a cross-eyed seamstress; he confessed a whole chapter of New York iniquity when he was "down on business;" he confessed Myra's cousin from Vermont and the wife of the last minister. Well, it's no use recapitulating what he didn't confess—a much easier task than what he did. Myra fainted, and I ran home, and when the divorce case that she instituted was called I only escaped a witness-box by being under age, and unreliable even then.

It was a lesson for me, and when I see a contrite spirit and a female in a Niobic condition I always long for Asa Farwell's Cherry and its property of wringing confession from the male sect.

THE INEQUALITY OF THE SEXES.

"ALL men are created free and equal." There's no living sort of doubt about that—free enough, and equal to most anything; but where's the nice little text about the equality of women? One of those bursted old adages used to run: "What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander." Not in my time, let me tell you, and I've had a great time.

There are two distinct laws on every subject—for man and woman. There are two distinct customs on every point—for man and woman. The only thing they take the same way is a coffin, and there wouldn't be any equality about that episode if the man could chip in for a minute after his last check was played. Most men entertain the Persian idea of the next world. They don't believe there are to be any women in heaven. That they will have visiting bands like Rentz's Female Minstrels to minstrel to 'em, they think is likely; but none of the ordinary house-keeping, button-sewing, baby-spanking kind of women people the average man's paradise.

There's an awful surprise in store for some of those men when they hang round and brace Peter for a pass. I don't suppose there are two he-angels to the dozen in all the heavenly host. Never mind where I get my theological views. They may be drawn from George Butler's Analogy or Charlie Foster's Séances, or I may have been under Pa Beecher's teaching. I don't say. But I do say to these arrogant and gallivanting men, "Look

out for a pullback when you get to heaven. It'll upset every theory you have ever had on earth." If I had no better information on the subject than the inequality of the sexes here, I should know that in the next world woman would have the chance to get even.

I have had some words with you already about the sufferings of us girls; but the cruellest blow we get in life is when we get a husband. It's the dreadfullest shock of all. It's quite the belief that none but professionals get bad husbands. That's a mistake. Most all husbands are bad; but the doings of public people are made public oftener, and that's the way this idea gets about.

And the conceit of these men! It just drives one wild to see 'em. I declare it acts on me like a dose of medicine to walk through that square and see 'em holding up posts and scratching the sidewalk with little canes, and twiddling their moustaches, and pulling their side-whiskers, with their poor wives at home washing and darning tights, or curling wigs, for making 'em pretty, to "mash" country towns next season.

No difference, indeed! Why, even in the way people think of men and women's personal appearance there's an awful difference. Where's the woman who enjoys a bald head properly? I've yet to find her. What a howl would go up if Mrs. Le Brun or Emma Skerritt should walk into a hotel dining-room without any false hair on? And just look at Jim Collier, Joe Polk and Jack Studley —all of 'em balder than so many pats of butter—sunning themselves on the square and fanning themselves with their straw hats! Why, Studley came on a line of Pope's (not W. H. or Charles) one day, and had it framed for his own picture:

"And Beauty draws us with a single hair."

[I believe he had just one on top at that time.]

Look at that duo of dramatists—Daly and Rowe! They haven't got a full set of teeth between 'em, all put together. That doesn't prevent their smiling like Cheshire cats on us girls, and we don't mind if there is a stage wait between their molars and incisors, or twenty years elapse between their eye-teeth without an event.

But WE—we girls have got to get in a row of piano keys just as soon as the men's awful conduct makes us gnash our first teeth to pieces. WE have got to take to scratches just as soon as grief has snatched us bald-headed. Bah! talk of equality, there's no such thing.

It's a pretty cool day, and if you stop here in the shade of the paper costumes in the Domestic Sewing Machine window, I'll show you just a few instances of man's base ingratitude. The square is full of them. And oh! how many have folded their tired hands above broken hearts, and gone to take the first rest they have had in many seasons! We girls have planted a dozen instances during the last few years.

There was Eliza—as good and true and sweet a woman as ever lived—lumpy and plain in form and features, with a big bank account wrested from small towns by years of hard work. She had every comfort, and what on earth she wanted of a husband no one of us could imagine; but she would marry, and she did. From being sought for, and admired for her various virtues, and undoubted talent, she subsided into a humdrum wife; lived in family hotels; went nowhere; saw her money invested and lost on non-paying but amusing ventures; had the great felicity of hearing occasionally how well Miss Polly This or Dolly That looked out driving behind her husband's fast horses with her husband as driver. As the gentleman took no meals at the family hotels, save a breakfast

in their private parlor, the boarders were not familiar with his frontispiece, and it led to dreadful blunders.

Poor Eliza, sitting one day in the public parlor, was saluted by a female patron of the house and the theatres in this fashion : "Wouldn't you like to go to a performance this afternoon? I made the acquaintance of Dolly Dasher, the juvenile lead at the Lycopodean, when I was in the country, and we got to be no end of friends. She sent me tickets for to-day. It might cheer you up a bit to go. She's such an imp on the stage. I don't think she'll be long there, however, as Melchisedec is so fond of her."

Eliza (*faintly*)—"Melchisedec?"

"Yes, the manager. He came down to Greenwich every Saturday she was there. I think they are engaged ; out every day together, and such presents—just a stream of 'em. He's a deal older ; but he's very rich. His first wife, I heard Dolly say, was awful rich."

Eliza groaned as she interrupted her tormentor with the feeble remark : "Well, she is not so awful rich now ! *I'm* his first wife."

She felt poor enough, I'll be bound, just at that minute.

It wasn't long after that word was passed around among us girls that Eliza had closed her earthly engagement. Melchisedec was a widower for a few months, and then married some young snip of a thing, who will serve him right before long, or I'm no judge.

Just as I said—here comes one of the deeply injured. She's rather a pretty little woman and she's a nice little actress. Looks a bit like Lotta, doesn't she? Well, she hasn't had Lotta's luck. She got married some years ago to a common sort of fellow, very common to look at, but she loved him dearly. What an affectionate wretch he

was, to be sure, during those first years! Then he went abroad and met another actress who had a lot of spare change to take him about upon. The story reached the wife and she cried and mourned over him, but believed in him. Oh, yes, there was no end to her trust in him. Finally he came back on a visit, and the little wife and he passed a week in a country place where the one-sided love was as plain as the handle on a jug. But she clung and clasped and blushed and beamed on him. It was a sort of little second-hand honeymoon for her. Then the time came for him to sail away to his London engagement, and the sad thing was not allowed to go into town to see him depart. But her heart-breaking farewell was taken in the early morning. There she stood on the stoop, looking through blinding tears at the figure climbing a little hill—a sort of good-bye hill, where all the husbands kissed their hands every morning as they went to the city to the girls they left behind them. Did this European scarecrow look back? Not once. He clutched his carpet-sack in one claw; he struck out for "England, home and beauty" with an umbrella in the other claw, and never turned till he got on board the steamer.

Oh, well, I wouldn't have given a last year's love-letter for the whole outlook; but poor Sis "laid the flattering unction to her soul" that it was all right. Then one day she got a letter coolly setting forth an incompatibility of something or other—and telling her, in so many words, that she might better herself as soon as she could, as he should never live with her again. If she had bettered herself would you blame her? There she is, smiling just now as she sees us, but wearing out her very soul in tears and lamentation for the living and the dead—both equally dead to her.

A RAILWAY ACQUAINTANCE.

THE GUSHER is an awful cockney. New York during almost any month, and particularly through the heat of summer, is good enough for her. She has been beguiled, when she was younger and more gullible, into a week at Long Branch, where she had to stand on her Saratoga to put on her swell harness, the room was so small and the trunk so big, where she slapped herself black and blue trying to break the backs of Jersey mosquitoes. She has put in a season at Saratoga, and poisoned herself drinking the nasty water, and perished like a frog in the dust and din of the place. But now she just enjoys the summer in the cool and shady sanctity of her own city home, and when the cold weather comes she takes a hack at the country, where she has found a truly comfortable home.

Way up among the Berkshires, with rare old woods outlying, and a grand prospect stretching out with a glimpse of the Catskills cut in blue, beyond the gorgeous autumn-dyed hills, there is a country house as is a country house—with marble baths and a city range, a billiard-room, a library of thousands of rare books, a gas-house, an ice-house, a grapery under glass, where bunches grow that would cost five dollars each in New York—with a perfect armory from which to choose, and go blazing away at the birds over the wooded hills.

That's the sort of country place, where one can browse about and get a bag of birds and walk in and have a

warm bath to take the tire out ; sit down to a capital dinner of soup, fish, game, vegetables, and fruit manufactured on the premises ; drink wines that have lain fifty years in the cellars of the family, and go off to bed in a room furnished by Marcotte, where the carpet cost $800. That's the sort of country life the Gusher loves, and she's been having a good time leading it for a week.

Out in these wilds there are some of the most surprising entertainments. There I found the posters of a Mr. Spaulding Foster's Oliver Twist combination. And on a rickety little train branching off from the Harlem line I came across the gayest specimen of the profession I ever met. She was gotten up in a cheap imitation of some of the actresses of old times. I've seen pictures of Menken and the Western girls, Lucille and Helen, upon which she had modelled her exterior. Since Absalom got hung by his back hair there hasn't been so much o' it in the woods. This girl had a dozen long curls depending from an immense waterfall ; she had a braid hitched on falling amidst the curls ; she had a hair doughnut built up on her brow and plastered down *à la* Menken on her forehead ; she had a couple of regular backwood beau-catchers in front of each ear. And, surmounting all this, she wore a hat such as one sees in the first act of "The Hunchback" on the head of the *Julia* of some travelling company—pink silk, wax beads, and a sweeping feather and bunch of "artificials," all more or less broken up by a life led in trunks and champagne baskets. With this excited-looking hat she wore a number of yards of tartan plaid wrapped round her in Helen McGregor fashion, and this wrap was surmounted by a lace shawl thrown over one shoulder in the *Camille* style. In her hand she bore the unmistakable brown paper cover "part," and ever and anon she referred to

the inner leaves—then shut her eyes and moved her lips as if in prayer.

The temptation was too much, and down I sat beside her. There were the usual remarks about the weather, and then I asked if she liked travelling. The flood-gates were opened. I just sat still and listened.

She made answer : " No, I can't say as I do ; but I have to be travelling all the time. I belong to the Barrett and Booth Mary Anderson combination. We played in Chatham last night, and to-night we show in Stephentown. I 'spose I'm foolish to take an engagement for this route, as Warde telegraphed me from Chicago last night that if I would join him he'd wait for me there till I'd finished the week with this troupe. You know who Warde is, I suppose ? He plays *Virginius* beautiful, and he told me he never see any *Virginia* come up to mine. *Virginia* is his daughter, you know, in the play. But Mr. Booth won't hear of my going."

" Indeed. I someway got the idea Mr. Booth was playing in New York."

" Yes. Ned Booth is playing there, most probable. This is Mr. Eglington Booth, the famous tragedy actor."

" Oh, indeed ! I know nothing of theatrical affairs."

" What a pity ! there's nothing so interesting as play acting ! I'm studying my part for the next piece. We do the 'Two Orphans' Monday night. This part of *Louise* was written for me. She's a blind girl, and gets lost, and has to beg for a dreadful old woman. We shan't have the old woman, because our company is a little short, and our old woman has to play my sister ; but Mr. Booth he doubles the *Chevalier Vaudrey* with *Antoine ;* and *Pierre*, that's Mr. Barrett——"

" Lawrence Barrett ? "

" No, not Larry Barrett ; this is Sam Barrett, the great

low comedian. He's great in *Pierre*, sings the 'Cork Leg,' and does a lame hornpipe. Oh, he's immense! We shall play it much better than it was done in New York. I'm very strong in it. The gentleman who wrote it for me, Mr. Boucicault, said nothing was ever seen like me in the part. I let down all my hair——"

"All that hair?"

"Yes."

"Your hair is very remarkable; some of it is curly and some of it straight."

"Yes, I've ruined my hair wearing wigs; it takes the curl out frightful; but I was telling you Mr. Barrett plays *Pierre* and the *Prefect of Police* and a Sister of Charity, and speaks outside when he ain't on for *Frochard*—that's the old woman. And when he's on, Mr. Booth speaks her lines at the wings—it's just as good."

"Much more compact; I should think it would be better."

"It is; we give a great rendition of it."

"And what is your name?"

"Anderson—Mary Anderson—I see you look—there's another Mary Anderson somewhere out West; she's a bread-and-butter school-girl, I have heard; I haven't seen her. She's a cheeky one, too; has her pictures taken as bold as brass, and puts my name on them, and she looks no more like me than chalk is like cheese."

"Is your company a large one?"

"Yes, it is, when we all get together; but we are somewhat scattered just at present. There's five of us altogether now, but we hire some new actors in every place just for the night. We shall have to hire some one to play the *Doctor* in 'The Two Orphans.'"

"Who plays the part that Robson made so much of in the piece, the comic servant?"

"Oh, Mr. Barrett; he's awful funny."

"And who plays the *Marquise?*—that's an important part."

"Why, how well you know the piece! Well, Mrs. Stanislaus Rockeby; she doubles with *Louise.*"

"How convenient; I would like to witness this unique performance."

"That's just what the Vineland *Farmer* calls me—and a more 'lucky' actor you never saw in your life. What's your name, by the way?"

"Do you ever see the *Mirror?*"

"Oh, to be sure! Mr. Booth gets all the theatrical papers."

"Well, my name, my dear, is Miss G. Gusher, and you'll find it appended to a column in that paper, where the interesting editor chooses to style me the Giddy Gusher."

BLESSED ARE THE HARD OF HEART.

THERE was a season of scholastic repose in my youth, when our young ladies' academy was kept by Eunice Billings, and Eunice was courted by a young shoemaker in Natick, Mass.

The postman was the postmaster's daughter, who brought Eunice her daily letter; and according to the length of that letter our studies were regulated. The Natick man was jealous, and wrote one day that his mind was full of "strange and dark imaginations." Eunice went into the class-room weeping, and we played all day.

It was the custom of this love-lorn maiden to make us each commit a verse in Holy Writ to memory. We did not all recite our verse, but she snapped us up one by one about the school, and woe betide the girl who couldn't jump on her hind legs and strike out plump from the shoulder with chapter and verse!

Eunice had several big girls she cottoned to who did most of the Bible verses, and little Giddy just got used to it, and never studied a verse. But one day, when a niece of Henry Wore Breeches delivered herself of a jaw-breaking chunk out of Deuteronomy, down the hall rang the fatal call, "Miss Gusher next!"

Now, even my enemies admit that I'm not backward in coming forward. I sprang to my feet without an instant's delay. Not a verse could I bring to mind, if I ever knew any; but that was no reason why I should not speak one, so I bravely sang out:

"Blessed are the hard of heart, for they shall inherit the salt of the earth.—MALACHITE v. x."

Eunice Billings was the own child of a minister and had been brought up on Bible. She never winked. A dozen of the big girls were regular Bible sharps. Not one fell over that verse. I had a dim sort of idea that a lot of little reports of Biblical affairs tacked on to the Old Testament bore the names of Esau, Gideon, Malachite, and with persuasive confidence I put forth my authority as Malachite.

That was, like dear little Buttercup's confession, "Many years ago"; but I look on that verse in a new light. That was not a composition of my own. The fact that I can't find it between the covers only convinces me that it has been left out. It's the essence of prophecy; it's the quintessence of truth: "Blessed are the hard of heart, for they shall inherit the salt of the earth."

The other night at the theatre, the Gusher from her perch above surveyed the crowd beneath, and a crowd of notabilities they were.

There sat under that far-away dome three bravely attired dames, whose ossification of heart began early. One of them belonged to Eunice's school, and as a girl, betrayed such a refrigerated condition of the right and left ventricle that Nellie Marcy prayed for its softening. Nellie was a gentle creature, who prayed for everything and everybody. She took me into her confidence one day, and told me that she was praying for her husband; "because, dear Giddy," said she, "if I am ever to marry, somewhere on this earth my dear husband is now living. So I pray for his proper guidance."

God bless the girl! She prayed to some purpose; for to-day she is Mrs. George B. McClellan.

Well, this stony young woman who displayed, so early

enough cruelty to entitle her to our small prayers, flourished like a green bay tree, and is one of the richest women in the State. Her father, in the days of Eunice Billings' educational academy, was a hard-working cabinet-maker, and on cold days was not above pulling Icyanne (as we'll call her) to school. She told us he was "the hired man," the young upstart! The poor, kind soul was a widower, and Icy was his only child. He slaved in his factory year in and year out, and in some lucky moment hit upon some invention of window shades that made his fortune. Icy married a pushing young man—pa furnished capital, and the money came tumbling in.

The old father in time broke up, as old fathers will. Madame Icyanne is in possession of all the property; she boards the old man in a rough farmer's family. Monday afternoon a seamstress, who is fixing over my plum-colored silk, showed me a bundle of clothes—half a dozen hickory shirts (if you know that cheap and awful garment), shirts of a small make, "let out" and patched to fit a big one; this was Madame's spring outfit—designed for that dear old man who pulled her to school on her sled, and went without an overcoat one winter to pay for a plain silk dress Icy insisted on having.

Oh! I know the whole interior of that adamantine career. You can always find good skating in Madame's vicinity; and sitting in the balcony, looking down on her crimson plush fox-fur-trimmed dolman, watching the twinkle of the immense solitaires in her ears—it's a wonder they didn't burn—I prayed, as Nellie Marcy did, for the cruel old thing; and then for the hundredth time I said to myself, as I felt a saline atmosphere exude from her person, "Blessed are the hard of heart, for they shall inherit the salt of the earth."

THE BABY.

At just the hour last Thursday that the *Mirror* reached the news-stands a bleak November blast was sweeping down the hillsides, a dark, forbidding sky hung overhead that leaked dismally all the morning and announced the storm that finished the day.

The houses are occasional along a patch of road leading off beyond McComb's Dam bridge, and for two hours, between eleven and one, no person traversed it but a man and woman and a helpless baby.

I can understand how a baby can be left on a rich man's doorstep. I can understand how a baby can be deserted in a railway station, left in a carriage, forsaken anywhere in haunts frequented by human beings. But how the heart of man, much less of woman, could take a mite of a weakling, who had been just eleven days in this cold world, and leave it on the sodden ground, with a heavy storm already begun, where its feeble wail could not reach the ears of any one fifty feet away, and where, in all possibility, no foot would pass in days, is beyond me to conceive.

But that man and woman left the road, and in a patch of bushes laid the forlorn thing down to die. A miserable rag of dress, a bit of coarse red flannel and a skirt formed his wardrobe, and every article was soaked through and through.

The gods lent him breath for one despairing yell just as the tramp of a mounted policeman broke the monotony

of the scene. Roundsman Wilkins says his horse scented the find and pricked his ears and halted. Again the perishing infant wailed, and in another minute the bundle of red flannel was on horseback pounding away for the station-house.

The bundle disclosed a dear little man child, eleven days old, perfect in form and intelligent in face; but so near the kingdom of heaven that had not help reached it when it did, Mr. Baby would have needed nothing but the cruel ground on which it nearly perished.

I worked over that atom till the blue arms and legs got limber enough to use. Then the law laid its strong grasp on the baby. It was raining cats and dogs, but down to the Central Office the baby had to go. By this time every heart in the hotel ached for the wretched little guest, so it was decided Mr. Baby should be entered on the register, assigned rooms, and remain. These hospitable intentions could not be carried out; to the Central Office went the baby, followed by the landlord, whose bachelor heart had been touched.

At headquarters he found the Charity Commissioners could alone relinquish the child; and then again a lot of rules and regulations provided Randall's Island for a certain time, and off next day, with the worst rain of all falling, went the miserable traveller.

On its track was the rescuing party, however; and in all the awful storm of Friday, in an open row boat from Randall's Island to New York, and from thence by train to High Bridge, went the young and travelled gentleman; and I've got him.

He has readily adapted himself to the new conditions. He takes to his bottle like a real man and he gives no trouble. His sad little story got into the papers and raised up powerful friends. Dr. Phelps, the Mellin's Food

man, sent a box of that wonderful stuff, with a poetical letter, in which he hopes "He may always remember that day in November when he was saved from a croup and a swim in the soup."

He will certainly remember and revere the name of Mellin and the thoughtfulness and kindness of Dr. Phelps. The Gusher had a wild idea of feeding it on milk punch and oyster soup.

At all events here he is, with the dogs sniffing curiously about him, the birds singing as if they liked him, and Chicot, the blessed monkey, as friendly as possible, sharing the tending, dividing the care, and doubling up at night. Baby on one arm, Chicot on the other, I in the middle—all three happy.

ABOUT INFANTS' NURSES.

When a woman is weakened in mind by old age, and when she is young and silly and has had no experience and is unfit for any other work, she advertises as an infant's nurse.

After parading the house like a torchlight procession for four nights ; after firing up patent nursery-lamps and heating food ; after singing until I was hoarse as a crow and walking until my feet ached, it occurred to me a nurse wouldn't be a bad investment, and I proceeded to answer advertisements.

The mite of a baby I have taken in is twenty-two days old and weighs five pounds. A mother will tell you that this age and this weight does not describe a rugged and robust citizen. Any one's finger is bigger than poor baby's legs. His little powder-box would cover his wee head to the shoulders, and altogether the Gusher's waif is a wafer—so frail and delicate that the tenderest care, the softest touch, and the closest attention are necessary to make a voter of him.

The remembrance of his awful bed in the bushes clings to his baby memory. The big blue eyes fill with tears, the little lip quivers, and he clutches at warm surrounding flannels to reassure himself that he is only dreaming, and that the hard, cold hillside is not his fate after all.

Therefore, as a nurse I wanted a motherly person with a wide, warm lap and caressing touch ; with deft fingers,

and above all a loving interest in the weak creature against whose life miserable wretches had conspired thus early.

The applicants began to arrive. They helped one old woman up-stairs whose breath made a ginny fog in the room. If ever she had tried to blow out the nursery lamp she'd have taken fire and had spontaneous combustion.

They brought up a hard, sinewy piece of crackled ware, whose bony fingers suggested the "laying out" business of the undertaker's assistant. She was the most mortuary bit of property I ever met. She was in a state of *rigor mortis*. Her teeth looked like babies' foot-stones in a family lot.

I was at a loss how to address her, but the words came instinctively.

"In the midst of life we are in death," began I cheerfully.

"I have had great experience with infants," said she.

I sighed as I thought how great the mortality is among those of tender years, but feeling called on to reply I remarked :

"Man is of few days and full——"

"I am a great disciplinarian," continued she, "and believe in system."

I looked at the bundle in my arms and felt that the enclosure would stand little discipline at the present time, and the human system was the only one for him for quite a while.

There's a man at the Institute Fair peddling zinc tombstones, and I recommended her to get a situation under him to exhibit and promote his sales.

Five more old women in various stages of decay and a pretty German girl named Gretchen turned up. I was

that glad to see something that looked alive that I engaged her on the spot.

She was very nice and neat, but she knew as much of a baby as I do of a steam engine.

She was utterly incapable and I told her so, and the following day found me sitting up with the little man inspecting new applicants.

I had answered an advertisement in Seventy-first Street of a Scotch woman of great experience and ability. She arrived—a regular Mrs. Gamp—and though I didn't like the old party's looks, the case was becoming desperate.

"You have brought up children?" I asked.

"I have five daughters of my own."

"I mean, have you brought up babies on the bottle?"

The old thing looked me over.

"Why don't you nurse the child yourself?" she questioned.

"Because the child is not mine—it is an adopted child," said I.

"Oh!" said she.

Then, knowing if she stayed she must hear all about it, I said:

"You have heard of the baby left to die in the woods at High Bridge?"

"I have" (with much asperity).

"This is the baby."

"And what are you doing with it?"

"Trying to get the life living in its puny, abused body at present," answered I.

"It's a child of sin more than likely," sniffed she.

"An undeniable fact," snorted I.

"And you expect a respectable person to take care of it?" said she.

"I do," said I. "No such old, disreputable party as you are will do to nurse this child."

"I'm a God-fearing woman," wailed the Scotch Presbyterian.

I won't quote profanity, so I can't tell you the next shot fired into the Scotch locker.

"You'd have taken a place with a drunken old father and a wanton mother if such a married couple had wanted a nurse?"

"If the child was born in wedlock, I could mind it—not otherwise," said she.

"Well, confound you! you canting heathen, you want to get to New York as soon as possible! I'll land you in the station-house as a burglar and a thief."

Now I was mad.

"You flatter yourself God made you, do you? Who do you suppose created this innocent creature? Have you got a manufacturing company in your creed? You pitiless, flinty-souled old hypocrite—you evil-smelling, unpleasant-looking old woman—I wouldn't let this sweet, weak baby into your arms any sooner than I'd trust it with a lunatic! The ground from which I took it is no colder than your nature—the sky that dripped above it no crueler, and the November wind that swept the wet, rotting leaves about it no worse a nurse than you would prove."

I was on my hind legs, madder than a hornet. Whether I was going to throw the baby at her, or the coal-scuttle, was only a matter of choice in her belief. She gathered her skirts and pelted off down the stairs and out through the bar like a black bombazine cyclone or a rusty crape blizzard.

Then I got desperate. A multitude of friends had called, and I was confused by their directions.

"The only thing to raise that baby on is Cuddles' Food."

"The only chance that child has is in the Monarch Substitute."

"The baby may pull through if you go right to work and feed it on the Lacteal Champion."

"That baby must have the great new food called Breast Milk Eclipsed, or Mother Wiped Out."

"Condensed milk is the best—Spread Eagle brand."

"Condensed milk makes fine-looking children, but they die the minute they get a little sick. Put lime water in the milk. Don't put any lime water in the milk. Pour boiling hot water over a soda cracker, add teaspoonful of sugar and tablespoonful of cream, you'll save that baby."

"Barley water is the only thing—one cow's milk may do the business for you—but he'll die if you don't try that."

I began to cry, and two persons speaking at once said: "Get a wet nurse."

I advertised. I believe every mother deserted her own child and came up here.

"You'll kill that child if the wet nurse's milk is too old," said one.

"If that woman's milk is too young there won't be any nourishment in it, and your baby will fail," said another.

"How can I tell?" I moaned.

"Get a doctor to get the nurse."

I went and enlisted the services of a Human Lactometer, and the good work went on.

The doctor visited an intelligence office for wet nurses, and related his experience. He questioned and examined several applicants, and finally came to a pretty German sitting quietly by.

"How old is your milk?" asked he.

"I haven't got any," said the girl.

"How old is your baby?" returned the doctor, thinking the German girl didn't understand.

"I haven't got any baby," she replied.

"Good Lord! what are you here for?" cried the doctor. "If you haven't had a baby, or got any milk, what are you doing here among the wet nurses?"

"I thought I might learn," said she meekly.

It was Gretchen, and I believe she was encouraged by something one of 'em told her, and she was gone away to "learn."

The doctor made a selection and a portly female came up that afternoon. She is to have a young girl to wait on her, she must have a milk punch every half-hour, six quarts of cocoa made at nine every evening to drink during the night. She must have a broiled chicken for breakfast, milk toast, baked potatoes, boiled rice and a quart panada. She must have a porterhouse steak and baked sweet potatoes and a bottle of porter and a quart custard for lunch. She must have a pair of partridges, chicken soup, more baked potatoes, a nice bit of boiled fish, and farina or tapioca pudding, a mould of blancmange, a quart of calves'-foot jelly for dinner, and a few things for supper I have forgotten to put down.

She can't wash anything; for putting her hands in water might give her a cold. She can't dress the baby for the same reason. She can't sleep with the baby, as being broken of her rest would occasion weariness and anxiety that would impair the nourishment.

So the Gusher begins to think she has opened a restaurant that will not relieve her condition in any one way. I presume you'll hear shortly that I've gone back to the bottle.

DREAMS.

It's a great pity some contrivance can't be built that, being applied to me at night, will catch and retain the visions that visit me during sleep. I believe I am the boss dreamer of the world. In less time I can dream more wonderful dreams than I ever heard spoken of, and, like those of Joseph, they are no unmeaning chumps of dreams.

I dreamed the night my folks moved into a new home that of a sudden, with terrible noises and full bands of brass instruments, the heavens rolled up like a patent window-shade, and I beheld tier upon tier of old gentlemen that resembled Peter Cooper and Horace Greeley. They were all in their shirt sleeves, and between the layers of old men there floated streaks of steam, through which their faces shone like benignant old washer-women. On a raised seat, similar to a leader of an orchestra, was a particularly noticeable party, whom I instantly recognized from the pictures to be Gabriel, even before I noticed the horn under his left arm. An enlarged kind of hotel register was opened before an angel of stentorian lungs, and the roll-call commenced. There was a wide, shining roadway opened at the right of this patriot, and a gloomy, cavernous descent led off at the left. As each name was called I saw my friends take them off by one road or the other. Most of 'em took the other.

I don't think there was a soul I ever knew but his or her name was called by the chairman, and amid much

clashing of cymbals and despairing howls they left the scene of their earthly troubles. This dream had begun by my looking at the skies rolling away through a window ; but, by one of those inexplicable irregularities, I was directly after out upon a vast plain with the multitude whose names were being called, and, forgetting in the excitement of the minute how good I had been, I concluded a shade tree would be about the thing I wanted. The nearest approach to such a thing seemed to be a chunky huckleberry bush, and into that I crept with less grace than celerity.

Through page after page went the loud-lunged angel. He got through the G's without ever breathing the name of Gusher. Once he began "Gid—" and I felt ill ; but he finished "Gideon Welles," and I felt relieved. At last the end of the book was reached. I was pleased to pieces. A huckleberry bush was good enough for me, after seeing my friends take on so about going. The bands tooted ; the angel shut the book with a reverberating bang. All the old men sitting on steam stood up, and the whole affair started off very much like a transformation scene.

"This lets me out," I said softly to myself ; but just then I began to wonder what was going to become of New York after its depopulation; and being a gregarious animal, hankering after the society of my kind, I felt indisposed to be left, so I coughed feebly—"Ahem ! ahem !"

"Who's that ?" asked the County Clerk.

"It's me," responded I, timidly and ungrammatically.

"Who's me ?"

"The Gusher of *The Mirror*."

"Indeed, indeed ; let me see." Evidently *The Mirror* has circulated among the higher circles, for the selectman

began to go over the list ; page after page he turned, after I crept out of the bush, but nowhere did the name of the Gusher appear.

"You have been very bad," began the bookkeeper, "but then you have been very good, and the good has so evened up the account that I can't say whether you should go up or down ; your record is so middling and strikes such an average that nothing remains but to assign you a place betwixt and between."

With that Peter Cooper and Horace Greeley came forward. William Cullen Bryant opened a little door into a narrow place like an old-fashioned brick oven. When the first couple undertook to run me inside this thing head first, naturally my first act was to kick. No solitary confinement for me. The kicking waked me. Behold, there was I, face down on the floor, sand-papering my nose on the carpet, and scraping the skin off my back trying to slide under the low side of a French bedstead.

Now, the other day I had a pretty dream. I have never stood before a bit of handsome old furniture that I did not wish that trees had tongues—so that the experience of a bit of mahogany might delight my ears.

One of my best friends and one of the best fellows in the world is Perkins, of Boston. He has lately fitted up a road-house just out of the city. The night he threw his doors open some of his many friends made a presentation of an old-fashioned clock that had a record for going as good as any that Golden could show out at Mystic Park.

A thousand dollars had been contributed in as many minutes to get up something handsome for "Perk." As much of it as could be used in a clock was expended; and brass-bound, heavily decorated, fitted with a face

that beamed with intelligence, and a pair of hands always ready to put up for a friend and for the right; with a voice as deep and musical as Boyle O'Reilly's—there was Perkins's clock. And Perkins is as proud of it as a boy is of his first trousers (providing they are not of the side-door cut).

Now, on a warm spring afternoon, sitting near that clock, above the hum of voices round me I began to hear a pleasant little treble singing, and paying attention I disentangled the words with very little trouble, and here is

THE SONG OF THE CLOCK.

I am thinking now of a far-away time,
  Back through many a score of years;
I was newly finished, and in my prime,
  When the sound of a bargain reached my ears.
I was being sold to a noble old man
  As a wedding gift to his favorite boy,
And I laughed as only a young clock can,
  And struck my hands together for joy.
I was carted away to a splendid place,
  And received with delight by a lovely wife,
And I thought, as I looked on her girlish face,
  'Twould be purely pleasure to time her life.
They stood me up in a corner tall,
  Next a big bay-window, through which I could look;
And very little in park or hall
  Escaped Miss Clock in her cosey nook.
Then an heir was born to my master dear;
  And I struck all day to denote my joy,
And to let the very remotest hear
  Of our proud possession—a baby boy.
But at last the home life of hall and park
  Was broken by crowds of city folk.
Among them was one I couldn't but mark,
  Whose lips breathed music whenever he spoke.

Proud lipped and haughty when others were by,
For my mistress he'd ever an altered tone ;
Another expression came into his eye
When by chance they were left in the room alone.
She saw not the shadow beneath the smile,
She drank her life's poison from out that look,
Forgetting my noble master the while.
They sat near the clock in the ingle nook
One stormy night—shall I ever forget ?
The wind had been muttering sullen and low ;
They came to my side. I can see them there yet,
With their arms intertwined, walking silent and slow.
When she glanced at my face, by a dim light's gleam,
I could see her turn pale, and knew by her look
She wished in her heart she had not been seen
With him—by the faithful old clock in her nook.
I trembled with fear when, at early dawn,
Careworn and pale my master stood
Uttering words of hate and scorn,
And watching the path that led from the wood ;
And when hurrying steps came flying past,
And they questioned which road of the two he took,
I felt that some trouble had come at last
To the heart of the clock in the ingle nook.
Another day and another went ;
I heard no sound ; it was still in the Hall,
Till, just as the week was nearly spent,
My master came to me—but under a pall.
The story was old : she was false to her vow,
And the bride that with pride to his bosom he took
Had fled with that man, and had broken his heart.
Why, it nearly broke mine in the ingle nook.
From that day on I have suffered more pain
Than I hope I shall ever know again.
Wet, tearful faces have watched the dead
And gazed into mine as the sad hours fled ;
Dim-eyed, faded, deserted wives,
Leading the saddest of human lives,
Have come to me, and I had to show
The cause they had for grief and woe.

Ah, well, that's passed, and a happier fate
Has reached me, though it cometh late.
Henceforth only in scenes of joy
My scoring faculties I employ ;
I mark the flight of pleasant hours,
I look through windows on beds of flowers ;
The loveliest home on earth I've found
At Perkins's place, on the "One Mile Ground."

"I honestly believe you have been asleep," says Perk, as he sends a Pommery cork against the ceiling, "perhaps dreaming ; for while Conant has been telling that dismal India-rubber story you have been smiling like a cherub, and just now you cried out as if something amused you."

"It did," I replied ; "I've been listening to your clock relating something of its past life."

"You have been dreaming, I tell you ; that's a noble clock. I will believe 'most anything of it but that it tells stories." That's what Perk said.

But the clock really did ring that doggerel in a dream to the champion dreamer.

DECORATIVE ART.

I REMEMBER feeling ill myself after a prolonged interview with some of the works of art hung in the Capitol. One particularly aggravating picture, representing the battle of something or other—a sort of military erysipelas—gave me the painters' colic. And I came near having total collapse when I struck Powell's boat-load of terrors. Here, now, Louis Tiffany decorates that unfortunate mausoleum of the beautiful, and straightway poor old gentlemen of uninpaired eyesight lie down and die. Throughout the length and breadth of the land female America is at it. Art shops are springing up on every street and avenue, where pigments and plaques, and turpentine and tambourines, and palettes and plaster-of-paris can be bought by the idle and idiotic.

To stand at a counter in one of these places and hear the adolescent artist prate of underglaze and firing, is to form some idea of the extent to which this disease has spread ; and to visit the homes of about fourteen girls out of twelve, is to realize the extent of female malignity and male endurance.

Maria Gushington (a second cousin of the Gusher) has been decorating her father's chamber ; the old man has been confined to his bed ever since the work was completed. She has hung two-ribbon-bowed tambourines on each side of his bed. On their sheepskin heads she has painted apoplectic roses and consumptive calla lilies. You know the lilies from the roses by their

complexions. On a satin screen a tableau, taken from "Mary had a Little Lamb," is beautifully daubed. You have no hesitation in selecting Mary from the lamb, because Mary has fewer legs than the lamb and is not so woolly.

But then Maria soared to higher flights. Above the mantel is an ambitious representation of Tannhauser and Venus, and she can give you twenty-seven guesses and you wouldn't come within three blocks of the subject. I firmly believed it to be the Annunciation, for some time, till, discovering the leg of a bed, I concluded it was the Raising of the Widow's Son (for in some way I understood it to be a Scriptural subject). Finding I was mistaken, it was to me, until yesterday, an interesting reproduction of that exciting episode, "The Charge of the Light Brigade." But Maria alluded to it then as her great picture of Tannhauser and Venus. I feel much upset in consequence: a ruthless change of opinion taking place suddenly inside me is as bad as an entire change of diet. No wonder the old man's sick! He has slept amid these pictorial puzzles for over a week, and he's all broken up.

History repeats itself. It's the old story of theorem painting and sampler working over again. My grandmother, of blessed memory, prosecuted to her latest days an art taught in ladies' academies during the administration of George Washington and his immediate successors. She possessed a multitude of little cards in which holes were cut the shape of fruit and flowers. She laid her card-board pattern on the article to be decorated, and passed a sponge wet with paint over the holes. This was simple, and the effect was as ample as that of the average painted tambourine.

However, if theorem painting was easy, the sampler

was a struggle. When the Lord's Prayer, the girl's age, two willow trees, and a selection of strawberries had been delineated on a piece of linen with laborious stitching, woman found that life was not a thornless bed of roses; and when it was hung up in the best room, over a horse-hair sofa, it was no unusual thing to have a hearse backed up to the front door as often as once a month, while the weak-kneed succumbed and only the fittest survived.

In view of the great increase of mortality and decorative art, would it not be well to take legislative means to restrain the young women? Let the unfortunate girl who doesn't know one tune from another, and has not a note in her voice, be prevented by law from undertaking the study of music. Let the artist who paints a rose so much like a bunion that a chiropodist would hang it out for a sign, be forcibly detained from disfiguring our homes.

THE SERGEANT'S STORY.

I HAVE a little story to tell you—that is, it's Brophy's story, and it's too pretty to keep to myself.

Sergeant Brophy was sent up here to this precinct from down-town about half a year ago. The Police Commissioners have an idea that any little indiscretion on the part of an officer, or any little spite of their own, is properly balanced by sending 'em to my precinct. They don't know how pleasant I make it for 'em.

During the six months or more that the Sergeant has looked after our personal safety, we have been fast friends. He is an observant, kindly, clever man, and tells me many interesting things. Last week he had a letter from a lady at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, recalling an incident that happened five years ago, and asking him to call on her immediately.

Down went the handsome Sergeant, with his sweetest smile. He met a very lovely girl of seventeen, who cried out when she saw him :

"You have changed somewhat, Mr. Brophy, but you are the man ! I have never forgotten your face."

"But you are so changed I should never suspect you were the little girl on Fourteenth Street that I recollect so well," returned Mr. Brophy.

And this was the incident she had mentioned in her note :

Five years before there was a middle-aged German and his wife, and daughter of twelve years, who resided

on Fourteenth Street, near Third Avenue. The man was a cabinet-maker, who had for a wife a delicate, cultured woman, evidently bred in a different circle from that in which she moved The pair were both discouraged by their fate in this country. He took to drink and she broke down in health. The slender, pale little girl went back and forth to the shops, and on the streets she met and was noticed by Mr. Brophy. Many times he had seen her late at night searching the saloons for her father. Many times he had helped her pilot his unsteady steps home. Finally the mother died, and the girl and her father lived on together, getting poorer and more wretched every week. One night one of their neighbors came in search of the officer, as a row was occurring in the Uhlinger rooms. Mr. Brophy found the father more than usually intoxicated, the little girl almost wild with grief, and a fine-looking, well-dressed woman in a great state of excitement.

He learned that the lady was a sister of the little girl's dead mother ; that she was a wealthy woman from Germany ; that she had come from over the Rhine in search of her little niece ; that the father had executed papers giving her a legal title to the child. But now that the hour of parting was come he clung to the girl, and in a drunken frenzy repulsed the aunt, who proposed taking the little one on board a steamer that night that would sail early next morning.

The officer's familiar features calmed the child. She begged and prayed not to be taken from her father. The aunt was stern ; she knew her rights. There was no pity in her heart for the man who had taken her sister from comfort to die in poverty in a strange land.

Brophy felt sorry for them all, but he recognized that the girl's salvation hung on the decision of the night ;

for the daughter's love for the wretched father was fast weakening the aunt's interest in her niece. So he took the little one into a neighbor's room and explained that nothing but the workhouse lay in waiting for them both ; that if she went with her aunt she could become an educated woman and able to help her father ; that her father, no longer having two to provide for, would find work and get along much better than he could with her. And finally he induced her to carry out the original programme and start that night for a brighter home in Germany. But the girl made him promise, as her only friend, to look out for the old man. The officer accepted the trust. The aunt took the girl away, and Brophy went 'round to the station-house to go on duty, with the Dutchman on his mind.

He made Tony Pastor joint executor of his legacy next day, and Tony took the old German into his theatre as a sort of upholstering scene-shifter. He pulled himself together and turned out very well on the helpful hands of Pastor and Brophy.

When George Knight wanted a useful man to manage his scenery on the road, Tony recommended Uhlinger. By this time he was as steady as Old Time's rocks. Over half the United States he travelled with the popular stars, Sophie and George Knight.

Time flies almost unnoticed ; though Sergeant Brophy, when he stopped to think of it, remembered that he first adopted old Uhlinger in 1880. He couldn't quite realize that the weeping, miserable little girl of Fourteenth Street had blossomed into the lovely woman who welcomed him at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. But it was Miss Uhlinger, well grown, well educated, in search of her father, after all.

The years of separation and the well-meant efforts of

the aunt to alienate the daughter's heart from the father's fate had been ineffectual.

Only a few months before the aunt had died, leaving all she had to her adopted child, and the girl's first thought was of America and the poor old loving man, who had had his failings, to be sure, but who had always loved her.

I don't suppose there was a better pleased man in New York than Sergeant Brophy. He knew just where to lay hands on his legacy—for the Knights were playing in Harlem, and old Uhlinger, his ward, was at his post. He had nothing to tell the daughter of her father but good. The man was sober, steady, contented, and happy. He had talked but lately with him of his daughter, and the father had said sadly :

"I know nothing of her ; her aunt would prevent her communicating with me. But if she is alive, she is a lady, and in that I rejoice. I feel that some day the thought of her father will come over her and she will write. My girl will never forget her poor old father."

And as Mr. Brophy repeated the conversation, the tears fell thick and fast from the girl's bright eyes.

It was 7.30 when the coupé rattled up to the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street Theatre, and the Sergeant sought George Knight in his dressing-room. In a few words the actor was told the officer's mission.

"Why, it's delightful!" said Knight. "Do you know, I'm as excited as a boy about it. I must see that meeting. I'm so glad for Uhlinger, poor old chap!"

And then Mr. Knight proposed that the girl should see the performance, and father and daughter be brought together afterwards.

"You know the sudden joy may be more than an old man can bear," said Sophie.

So Mr. Brophy and his charge went into a box, and the girl agreed to curb her impatience till her coming should be broken quietly.

Poor Uhlinger couldn't understand why the sympathetic Mrs. Knight asked him if he wouldn't be good enough to go into the dressing-room and fix up a bit, as she wanted him to go somewhere with her after the show. So his ruddy face shone with recent soap, and his gray, thin locks were carefully brushed, as the curtain was going up for the last time.

Mrs. Knight called him to the wing and pointed out the girl in the box.

"Seems to me I know that lady; did you ever see her before, Uhlinger?"

"No, I can't say I have. And yet—and yet!"

The old man stood and gazed, as the actress was obliged to go on the stage. He couldn't take his eyes off that strange lady's face. All of a sudden he caught sight of the ruddy face and blond head of her escort, the Sergeant. Then came a tremor at his heart—an undefined thought. The poor man rushed up to the back as Mrs. Knight came off.

"I know the party that lady is with. He's a good friend of mine. Oh, Mrs. Knight! someway—I don't know," stammered out the old man.

"Wait here for me," whispered Mrs. Knight. "The curtain is on the drop in just two minutes more. Wait here for me."

And off she ran. The applause that followed came dimly to poor Uhlinger's ears, as he stood, getting each instant more nervous and dazed, as one thought after another presented itself. Past him flew one after the other of the company on the way to the dressing-rooms; then George, his boyish face glowing with pleasure;

then Sophie, the tears ready to start in her laughing eyes; then the well-put-up figure of the Sergeant, and beside him the charming, elegant young lady.

"We've got a big surprise for you," began Knight.

"Now, you mustn't——" We shall never know what Mrs. Knight was going to say he mustn't do, for just as Brophy laid his hand on the old man's shoulder the young lady cried out:

"Oh, father! don't you know your daughter Annie? I've come back to get you. I've come back!"

And she threw herself into his arms, and Mr. and Mrs. Knight turned away with tearful eyes, and Brophy went up stage and blew his nose like a trumpet.

"Why," said he to me, "I've been taking in theatres all my days and have seen the tallest kind of emotional acting: long-lost fathers and returned daughters have fallen into each other's arms on the stage a hundred times before me; but this was the real thing, and I wouldn't have missed it for the world."

FIRST LOVE.

I THINK the Lord had just finished the seasons when he made woman ; there's so much in her that is reminiscent of the previous performance. The four seasons occur and are as natural in her life as the year's ; just as the other four seasons—pepper, salt, etc.—belong to the other sex.

But the budding, blossoming, fruitful year is reproduced in the changing lifetime of a woman. And these autumn days, with their soaking rains and close-following gusts of wind, that dim the glory of the year's maturity and strip the trees that they may reach their naked arms to Heaven when left defenceless in their age—why, what more like the tears and passion of a lovely woman, crying out against the pitiless hand that is stealing her freshness and her beauty ?

There's a catalpa tree beside my windows that I likened this year to a coy young girl. When sturdy maples stretched their welcoming green branches towards her, when a silver ash trembled with ill-concealed affection for her, she stood until late in June with timid, half-decided buds breaking out all over her, when suddenly the air was filled with perfume, and Kate Alper was covered with white blossoms, like a bride.

It was a beautiful honeymoon for all of us.

We lived in an atmosphere heavy with sweets for one entire month. Then the maple, who had plainly won the coy Kate, had what you might call a revulsion of feeling.

The servants said it was a "high wind." Anyway, two huge arms that had held her lovingly, broke close to the trunk, and fell down about her astonished roots.

I went out and inspected the ghastly accident.

"Was there vitality enough in the still adhering fragments to animate those branches if I just wired 'em into position?" I asked myself — and experience yelled "No," like the echoes in a cavern.

Try to resuscitate corpses; endeavor to teach the statues on monuments to read their own inscriptions; seek to put an old, sour apple back into its blossom — but don't try to put a pair of arms around an object of past affection when once they have lost the hugging proclivity.

So Kate was left without companionship, and, though other and younger green things courted her, she has been slowly dying all summer.

To-day her crown is bleached; the air is laden with withered leaves that, like unfulfilled hopes, are leaving her when most she needs 'em; clumsy, fattening beans hang where the blossoms swung. She's old and ugly, and looking forward with some uncertainty to a resurrection.

I can't think of a thing to do or say to her that will comfort her, so I just go out and sing in a low, minor— Harry Miner—key:

> "It's a world of sorrow and sin,
> A world of trouble and care;
> And the nicest crown a woman can win
> Is very unpleasant to wear."

There's no nation on the earth that contains so many self-supporting, intelligent women as the Yankee one.

In England, when John turns out a failure his Mary

Ann accepts the situation, and lives along to a fat old age with the busted trust company, never thinking of taking the remedy into her own hands.

But, good gracious! Look at us! About six women to the dozen are on their second lap before they quit the track. They give it a fair trial, but the grand majority finish their journey alone.

I honestly believe the popular marriage certificate twenty years from now will have a divorce coupon attached, to cut off and use in six or twelve months.

And very much of this is brought about by a premature decision. Most of us who waited a reasonable time laughed to scorn the earlier objects of their idolatry.

A man ignorantly says: "Let me be the first love of the girl I marry;" when the blessed goose, if he only knew it, would find his chances a great deal better if he was the fifteenth.

In some of the cantons of Switzerland they don't allow parties to contract marriage until the girl is twenty-five. It's a wise dispensation of the law. It gives a girl a chance to have a few love affairs and find out what suits her.

When the Gusher was thirteen she was madly in love with a young fellow who drove a baker's cart and served the rolls in the morning. He was underwitted—be sure of that! for one day he suggested we should elope to Weathersfield, where his uncle was keeper of a feed-store and occasional preacher in a meeting-house.

The prospect was simply delightful. To me that bake-cart driver, who always smelled of fried doughnuts, and had warts on his hands as big as his own tea-biscuit, seemed a fate supremely blest.

Someway, a large order for sugar ginger-bread, given by a circus, deferred the elopement. I went to the circus,

and realized how inferior is first love to a really great second attachment. A spangled-trunked young man who threw a double somersault dethroned the baker boy. Fortunately, the departing circus cut short this affair of the heart, and I made up my mind, being in sight of fourteen, that I had escaped the follies of youth and knew what a grand, lasting, life-long affection was.

I then met my fate. He was somewhat elderly and wore eye-glasses. I congratulated myself on having placed my heart on a man worthy its possession. For a long time—nearly six months—I believed all that was to arrive had arrived in my life. We were engaged.

He was a sort of Casaubon, such as marches through "Middlemarch;" and to bring sunlight into that man's existence was my sole object for a half year. The war gobbled this adorable being, and about thirty-six real, enduring, undying devotions occupied my affections during the next five years. Casaubon was wiped out. Here last week a card was brought up to me, and with much difficulty its owner was hoisted into the apartments —a mummy of the Cheopean era.

I looked at him in horror. Was this the hero whose dignity and priggishness had established him in my youthful esteem as a very superior person? What an escape!

As I thought of the long years in which, but for an all-wise Providence and an indignant parent, I might have been watching the dreadful change to the horrible, I fairly shuddered.

So I made a mental note that the vast inventive ability I possess shall be directed to the construction of a machine that shall not, like Edison's, reproduce the utterances of the past, but shall forecast the changes of time and show a demented girl what sort of an old man she'll have in

twenty-five years, if she takes up with the present infatuation.

A machine that can take an engaged young man and give him a private view of Emma Jane at the age of forty-five will work a big reformation in things matrimonial.

All this is not to get into the Is-Marriage-a-Failure question, but to answer one a girl sends me. She "is fifteen and very mature for her years," and she asks, "Am I too young to marry?"

And I say emphatically, yes! She'll be too young to marry until she's fifty, and then she'd better think she's too old, and so pull through and be comfortable.

ABOUT DOGS.

If any one can suggest an attachment—an anodyne or preventive—to attach to a dog to break him of eating shoes and boots, will he or she please forward it to the Gusher? Around the halls of dazzling light occupied by the subscriber you can find hooks and shingle-nails galore. These are there for the purpose of suspending all foot-gear when it's out of use. Guests are usually informed, before taking their clothes off, that Mr. Perkins is a setter, addicted to a diet of Oxford ties.

There are nights when I go to bed in a hurry, under an impression that the bed is trying to run away; and on these occasions the hooks are neglected and the shoes reach the floor—a sad occasion, I assure you, for that's the end of 'em. Perkins breakfasts early on an indigestible boot-heel and scraps of patent leather.

Monday morning was a wild one *chez moi*. A wail came up the corridor from Eleanor Morretti. "Some one has carried off my boots!"

Simultaneously a cry came from the next room, and Madame Ponisi held up a shoe, half gone.

In an instant I thought of my own pedal gear, and sprang up. The shoe drawer had been left open, and Perkins had fed; some villanous instinct had led him to select one of each pair; and a boot, a low shoe, and a slipper mourned its mate.

Later in the day a sad-eyed woman appeared in a New York shop, wearing one Oxford tie and one Louis Quinze

slipper. The fact that one was black kid and the other bronze added a keener pang to her misery, perhaps ; but she is learning that the lesson of life is one of sorrow. Dick (who is a railroad man) brought over to-day a superannuated tin ticket-box, with a slot in the top and a padlock on the side. This he recommends as a boot and shoe repository, and it has been accepted and gone into immediate use in most of the rooms.

As we sat on the piazza that evening the conversation turned on the mournful event of the morning, when Perkins went through our effects ; and numerous were the anecdotes his exploits elicited.

Edwin Forrest once told Madame Ponisi of his adventure with a boot-chewing dog. It was when he was very poor that he shared his hard fate with Brutus, a fine, fond retriever. An engagement was offered him while in Cincinnati to play in Dayton, and the embryo eminent accepted it. Alas ! railway fares were not provided, and all the sleepers his contract called for he found under the rails as he footed it from Cincinnati to Dayton in company with Brutus. Footsore and weary, the actor and his dog reached a boarding-house and a bed, and Forrest slept sound and dreamless, you may be sure. But a horrible sight met his eye as he commenced to dress next morning. Brutus had feasted on his left boot ; there was little more than the straps and heel left, as evidence that he had ever had a left boot.

This was not the era when a strapped actor could brace a box-office and ask for an advance. There was always an obtainable chance that the ghost would refrain from pedestrian exercise at the close of the week, and certainly no inducement for its taking the air so early in the engagement.

Forrest knew all this. Not until the following Monday

could he hope for boots, and his pride suggested an excuse for his bootless condition. He unpacked a russet sandal that inclosed his mighty foot in "The Gladiator." He vowed he had sprained his ankle, leaping from the car on its arrival at the Dayton depot. He went lame till salary day, and wore his sandal with a limp till he clutched the stamps to buy a new pair of boots—seven troubled days.

Virginia Buchanan began to laugh as she told of a much worse predicament her father had once been in. He was on a tour; and sending his trunks on, he went to spend Sunday with his wife and daughter, equipped with a hand-satchel and the suit of clothes on his back. Mother and daughter went to church, and returned at noon to find the tragedian in bed.

"Why, this is simply dreadful!" said Mrs. Buchanan; "twelve o'clock and you are not up yet."

"You can't expect a man to get up without his trousers, can you?" growled the bed-ridden sufferer. "Look at my pants!"

They tried to, but there was so little left to look at that the invitation seemed thrown away. The favorite house-dog had ribboned those trousers; and as McKean Buchanan was a very tall man he remained in bed most of the day, while a village tailor lengthened a pair in his stock to fit the requirements.

Will Elsbre related his adventures. He had been off one warm day for a stroll, taking a pet bull-dog as companion, when he reached a quiet bend in the river, far from the haunts of man, and concluded to indulge in a swim. Grip was in the distance interested in the track of a mole; so while his back was turned Elsbre stuck his umbrella into the ground and grouped his raiment round it. Having erected this monument to the cardinal virtues, he shouted to Grip to come and watch the wardrobe, and

took a header into the water. Grip trotted up, recognized his duty, and sat down on a shirt, like a girl on the Casino roof, determined not to leave till the show was over. Elsbre had a noble swim, and clambered out to dress. Not much! Grip had no acquaintance with his master in that condition. He refused to recognize the voice and gestures of the distracted bather. Every time Elsbre got within ten feet of him the hair on Grip's back rose in a straight line. His teeth became the most prominent features of the landscape, and a curdling growl probed the adjacent air.

For one mortal hour did Elsbre coax and cajole the beast, until, getting desperate, he began to throw stones. Grip deserted his post to take a short run, and Elsbre seized his pants, only to find that the agile animal had whipped back and got a death grip on one leg of 'em. Elsbre pulled, and the dog hung on. Of a sudden they parted, and Grip flew over the hills with the entire half of a pair of gray pants!

Consternation reigned in the Elsbre family when Grip landed on the piazza with the leg of gray trousers in his jaws. There was Will's note-book in the pocket; there was his knife; there was his cigarette case. Lamentation rent the air. As Grip had the trousers, a son and brother was gone—nothing left but half his pants! Then a search for the body was made, that resulted in finding young Elsbre on a sand-hill trying to make an off leg of trouser out of his coat sleeves.

After this Julia Percy related the life and times of Puck. Puck was a tiny skye terrier the Gusher once gave her, and it inherited the slipper-slaughtering, boot-butchering instincts of its mother and father. Mrs. Percy and Puck on one occasion journeyed to Newton Falls, and the lady's vacation was filled with anxious care.

Her room opened on a piazza that girdled the house, and, on an average, Puck plunged through the window lugging some one's boot or shoe half a dozen times a day.

The worry of returning property and the excitement of the chase kept the lady up in G most of the time. But Puck's prowess as a catcher of mice atoned for his depredations.

In the next room to Mrs. Percy stopped a venerable couple, who seemed to be idiots on the subject of mice. They would rap on the wall and shriek for Puck, as they climbed on chairs and waited for the small champion to come and collar a mouse the size of a chestnut.

One day the old lady was ill, and the old gentleman went to a bureau drawer to get her a clean cap, when he spied a mouse in the corner of it, and, hastily shutting it, sounded the usual battle-cry of "Puck! Puck!" In rushed the vigilant, and the old man carefully opened the dreadful drawer, and in plunged Puck.

"Shake it up!" shouted the old man.

Julia stood on a chair with gathered skirts, and cried, "Sick him!"

But it was a "Sick her!" when Puck emerged; for he had torn the false front of the invalid into 20,000 hairs; and Ma lay abed while Pa took some of the "mouse" up to Helmer and had another toupee made before she could enter polite society.

Sidney Rosenfeld then told of Spider and the late convulsions in his peaceful home. Spider is a bull-dog, but a bull-dog of such a languid, cataleptic nature that he gradually got himself despised for his gentleness. Sidney, the other day, between the verses of a topical song, addressed himself to the dog, and anathematized his milk-and-water character.

"You are a doglet that's a blotlet on your race!" said

he. "There's no fightlet in your makelet; there's no bloodlet in your eyelet, despite the dotlet on your eye."

And Spider got up and went out to the barn, and engaged in an encounter with a big mongrel retainer, and licked him, and got a taste for gore, and ran amuck through Yonkers eating dog.

This unexpected change of base kept the Rosenfeld family busy. Spider is at last around; he's fighting everything. Mrs. Rosenfeld took a meek and lowly follower of the Lord out to air him after the family horse, followed by the family dog Spider.

They journeyed to a neighboring village, and the parson was speaking instructively of the work of St. Paul in Ephesus, when Spider clinched with a yaller dog. The yelps brought, as usual, recruits from all directions. The parson got out, and broke up the carriage-whip. Mrs. Rosenfeld got out and sought to grasp Spider's tail. The natives gathered, and they reviled the parson for coming over there to have dog-fights. Finally, torn, bloody, but victorious, Spider abandoned his victim, and went home behind the chariot-wheels, a disgraceful spectacle of the triumph of brute force.

Mrs. Rosenfeld wants a recipe to make Spider return to the pristine amiability that animated him before Sidney roused his spirit; and I want a cure for boot-chewing, before it gets too cold to go barefoot.

* * * * * *

Did I ever tell you how I became possessed of one of my most faithful and best-loved dog friends?

It was a good many years ago—in the spring, I think—that I went down Broadway in my best clothes. It was a brand-new costume. I was a streak of velvet and jet, and on such good terms with myself that I thank-

fully accepted my reflection as I passed the shop windows.

It was to look at my satisfactory condition that I paused somewhere about Ninth Street at a dry-goods store display. Against some black goods in a show-case I came out in great form; but behind the show-case lay curled a dog, the most miserable specimen of the ash-barrel kioodle I ever beheld.

Want had pinched him; hunger had collapsed his flues; some wretch had scalded him; he was deserted, friendless, and utterly forlorn. He raised his eyes humbly and hungrily to mine, and met a glance that caused him to feebly thump a thank with his hairless stump of a tail. I felt a lump in my throat and a tenpence in my pocket, and I marched round the first corner and walked till I struck a butcher shop. I invested in some well-chopped beef, and concealing a good big paper horn of it in my parasol I trotted back to Lazarus, shook out the meat in a grateful stream under his nose, and departed, better pleased with myself than before, if such a thing could be.

About Fourteenth Street I began to see people pass me in a strange way. Admiration sat on their countenances as they approached. As they got even with me, a smile of ridicule spread like a plaster over their faces.

"Good Lord!" thought I; "am I losing anything off? Has anything burst in the rear? Something surely is the matter with my—behind me." I felt. I tried to investigate the difficulty. All at once I looked in the shop windows. One glance explained the truth. That dog was as close to me as if he'd been tied to my sash. He put his feet down in my tracks. We were doing the Sing Sing lock-step up Broadway.

Ye gods! but he was a spectacle. The meat had taken effect, not on his body, but his affections. I jumped into an omnibus. He laid his head on the lower step and came right along. I flew to my home, and he weakly turned into the same street. I got in and up-stairs, when the girl told me a dog was taking the skin off the front door in an effort to get in.

It was fate! I invited Lazarus to the back yard, and he lived for many happy years, until death claimed him, an awful specimen of what nature can do in building dogs—but the attached, valued friend of the Gusher.

THE BEST TIME TO DIE.

I DON'T know that those hilarious young people are far wrong who take the elderly members of their families to the banks of the Ganges and stop up their eyes and ears with sacred mud and leave them for the crocodiles to attend to. I see so many old pumps making themselves ridiculous, that it is a matter of regret that the Hudson River doesn't furnish the right sort of mud for the stuffing process.

I have been lately assisting in a lodge of sorrow celebrated by four sisters. Their mother died eight years ago, and for eight years they have kept a marvellous house, set an irreproachable table, dressed the old man like an advertisement for a Troy laundry, and made the most agreeable home a miserable old he-sinner ever had. In April last they took in, out of charity, the overgrown, gawky daughter of their washer-woman.

Linda was a flaxen-haired, snub nosed, Teutonic damsel of sixteen. She washed dishes, ran errands, and was a sort of maid-of-all-work to the mature old party who cooked and did the heavy business in the family.

Old Pa owns a farm over near Orange, in New Jersey, and it has been the custom to retire to this abode in June and stay there till October. In June they all departed, taking the faithful cook, and leaving Linda in the city house, to which Linda's ma also went, to keep it till the family returned in the fall. Last August one of the daughters came into the city, shopping, and I met her at

a dry-goods counter. It occurred to me that I had met Pa once or twice during the summer, so I said: "Your father is not out at Orange with you, is he?"

"Oh, yes! but he's been making alterations in the house on Sixty-third Street; so he has been in town frequently," replied Miss ——. I didn't tell her that I'd seen him at Wallack's and Coney Island with one of the "alterations." Old Poppy was just about the age when they stuff 'em with mud along the Ganges, and, of course, was making the usual fool of himself.

I bade my friend good-by, and heard nothing more till last week, when the four sisters turned up in a state of mental woe bordering on distraction.

It seems a neighbor wrote 'em that Pop and Linda were seen continually together; that Linda occupied the best room, as they saw by the gas in the window, evenings; that she sat in the parlors, and had taken all the linen covers off the furniture, and that their ma's picture was gone from over the piano in the front of the house, as they had discovered by observations from the street and back yard.

The girls piled into town. Alas! too true was the information. The dreadful, snub-nosed, freckle-faced, sixteen-year-older was boss!

"You dreadful creature!" cried Minerva, who is twenty-five. "Pick up your clothes and leave this house."

"Not much," returned Linda. "I was more to home here as you. I vas married to your fader more as six weeks. Dere vas my marriage bapers."

Sure enough, the old noodle had married the girl; and the former washer-woman was mother-in-law, and on deck, as poor Minerva found.

Poppy is seventy-two years old, and manages his busi-

ness with intelligence. There's no ground for a *lunatico inquirendo*, that I can see; but he ought to be stuffed—there's no doubt about that!

* * * * * *

The doctrine of euthanasia is not a bad one; but much better it would be for a lot of theatrical people, if, with unimpaired powers, they stepped down and out.

How many thousands who saw Ristori, when, in the grandeur of tragic strength, she played at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, but who witnessed a shaky old woman's struggle with a strange language in which she was badly worsted—can believe what a gorgeous actress she used to be!

Had it pleased the gods to strike down John McCullough as he left the stage one night in the flowing robes of *Virginius*, what "an end devoutly to be wished" it would have been!

Then the pomp, and the pageantry, and the big funeral, and the columns and columns of adulatory reminiscences in the papers!

Instead, a weekly report of imbecile utterances; a description of the enfeebled man tottering, step by step, downward all the time; statements of the terrible indications of a wrecked mind and dying body, harrowing those who remember him with tenderness. Finally, a going out of the flickering light, and a quiet laying away, by those who cannot say "We are sorry he is dead"! Then the obituary record of his life, its work, its triumph and its slow destruction—a column that has been set up in every newspaper office in the country for months, awaiting the end!

There are numberless members of the profession scattered about the world, in alms-houses, insane asylums, charity hospitals, and the like, who in their time have been

the favorites of the fickle public, but, forgotten and forsaken, having outlived their usefulness, they linger on the scene unloving and unloved—to what purpose? They are burdens to themselves and the world. Ah! if they had only died while yet the bloom was on 'em! Descendants would like to speak of "My uncle, the celebrated artist, who died"; and the Lord knows they will never mention "My uncle, who is just now on the Island," or "My aunt, Mrs. ——, now insane"! It makes a heap of difference, I tell you.

I think a most admirable characteristic is that which induced John Matthews, in a burst of prosperity, to go and get measured for his coffin and pay his funeral expenses. He won't die any the sooner, and he carries the receipt in his pocket—a potent charm to cheer many an impecunious hour.

There's the coffin, finished years ago, standing up in the undertaker's shop and seasoning. There'll be no unpleasant shrinkage or warping to annoy him. The latest fashion in trimmings can be run in when wanted for use. They will just polish up the plate and add one word and a few figures to the legend upon it, and genial, erudite Johnny, with his Latin quotations, will rest all the happier that he left little for friends to do but lay their flowers and regrets on the coffin he bought years ago for himself.

We all remember Adelaide Neilson, radiantly lovely—the ideal *Juliet!* As I write her name there seems to float back to me, amid the hum of a thousand approving voices, the odor of sweet flowers, so indissoluble are the words triumph, tribute, and Neilson.

The greatness of Heron's past was dimmed by the later exhibitions of her decadence. I always see her as I saw her last—dishevelled, gray, obese, and generally

broken up and down; called out at a benefit at Niblo's Garden, indulging in a maudlin, sentimental wail before the footlights, and then deliberately sitting on the stage, so overcome with emotion was she. How much better had she been called earlier off the scene!

I mind me of a man who struggled for years amid the poverty of journalism, with a pleasant wife and promising children to urge him to further endeavor. In an unexpected hour success perched upon his banner, and with astonishing rapidity he made a fortune.

He was far from being an Adonis, but, like my friend old Pop, money made him attractive. He found a younger woman than madame, who had shared youth and poverty with him.

The spectacle of this gaunt gallant and this shrewd young party has been constantly seen about town.

A lady who had crossed the Atlantic a year or two before with him and his family sat with me, about six months ago, in a certain theatre.

"Why, there's Mr. ——," said she, recognizing the newly made rich man. "Who's the girl? He has no daughter."

Some member of the party made a pertinent reply, and my friend held up her hands in dismay as she remarked:

"Well, I'm beginning to doubt there is a Providence, as I see the faithful, helpful wives and mothers forsaken in their waning health and strength by these wretched men. Why, that chit wouldn't look at that crane if he hadn't made a little money!"

Ah, well! The retributive justice is coming along very steadily. "The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceeding fine."

A SPECIMEN BOARDING-HOUSE.

THE Gusher, thank Heaven! knows little about boarding-houses, and she means to know less before she knows more; but she has just had a short experience that will furnish forth a few remarks to her congregation.

Miss Snip and her ma board at Mrs. Huckleberry's high-toned establishment, and misfortune elected that my lot should be cast among 'em the entirety of Wednesday last. The widow of a General Somebody and the relict of the Rev. Hebron Waters have the second floor; two extremely swell young theological students and an old maid hang out on the third; Miss Snip and ma occupy the back, and the front parlor is to rent, with first-class board and a turn-up bedstead. Miss Snip and ma said it would be "sweet for me and Ichabod," if Ichabod could be brought to think so.

Anyway, I was to try a visit to the Snips' and see how I liked it. Miss Huckleberry showed me the "apartments," as she called 'em. There was a sort of arch thrown up in the ceiling that constituted the saloon parlor—two rooms, in the landlady's eyes. My soul revolted at the mechanical apparatus she exhibited as the bed and put through its paces. On first acquaintance this affair looked like an *étagère*. "An Etegerry bedstead," General Somebody's widow called it. Mrs. Huckleberry pulled some stops and valves, detached the front, and it became a wash-stand. She turned some cranks and shoved some bolts, and it turned gracefully on end, and

there were four pillows, their flues collapsed by mutual pressure. Then a second crank and cog-wheel began the work of uncoiling. The thing stretched out and yawned till it fell at my feet, a bed all made up.

"It's beautiful!" said Mrs. Huckleberry. I allowed all that, but asked her what guarantee she gave that it wouldn't get a-going during the night and turn into a step-ladder or a fire-escape?

She said, with a lack of confidence, that it never *had* done so as yet. The Rev. Thomas Miraculous had slept in it all winter. This reference didn't establish my faith. An "Etegerry" bedstead might get through the winter safely with the Rev. Thomas, and yet be roused by the Gusher in one week to flights of fancy surpassing those in Young's "Night Thoughts."

However, I passed on the bed, and she ordered up the dinner. Oh! how sweetly swell we were. The widow of the Rev. Hebron Waters, in a dyed purple silk, with a portrait like a door-plate, of the late Hebron in his robes, on her bosom. I had Pinky Fay with me, and she asked promptly "who the old man in his night-gown was?" Miss Snip and ma sat up like Stoughton-bottles lashed in by new spring frocks, till a swallow of water pinched 'em like a soldier-crab. The two students, buttoned up to the neck with clerical collars, and steel-bowed eye-glasses, looked like breeding a famine at their end of the table. The relict of Hebron asked a blessing (just a little one, to go round the corner where she and Mrs. General took their food), and the feast began. Mrs. General praised everything, and I must think she owes a board-bill.

"This Jumbo soup is delicious," moaned that lady, as she tasted a grayish fluid that was offered as gumbo.

"Is this Jumbo's soup?" asked Pinky.

"Little children should be seen and not heard," said

Mrs. Huckleberry. (Pinky climbed on her chair and raised both arms.)

"How is Jumbo soup made?" murmured Miss Snip, blushing and looking at the sickest of the two theological students.

"What a question, sis! One would think you was going to housekeeping," laughed the jolly old Mrs. General.

"Could you make Jumbo soup, Miss Gusher?"

"I could make this, I think, by soaking one of Barnum's advertisements in a pail of water over night," I said authoritatively. This created discussion. The fish was brought in, a nice little creature boiled in a bucket of thin paste, with a lemon at his head and a sprig of green at his tail.

"How did he get drowned?" asked Pinky.

All the boarders picked at a dab of this course, and looked hungrily at the sideboard where Mr. Huckleberry was carving a piece of beef with such care and dexterity that I felt sure his place was in a hospital—not a boarding-house. Eight leaves of salad and a hard-boiled egg were placed before Johnny Nicodemus, the theological student. "Do make the salad for us to-day!" chirped Mrs. Huckleberry. "You have no idea, dear Miss Gusher, what a delicious salad he makes!"

I thought by the size of it, it was unlikely I ever should, as there were ten of us to help, and not a leaf would be left to leave me to judge by the time it reached the head of the table.

The price of spring vegetables became the topic of conversation, and Hebron's widow and Mrs. General betrayed a nervous anxiety and an amount of information about the markets that can only be entertained by people half starved. I can imagine Robinson Crusoe fishing up

a newspaper washed inshore from some passing vessel, and sitting down and reading about lamb and green pease and the latest way of serving French artichokes. His expression was on the faces of these poor boarding women. I began to feel depressed, and when a wedge of pie was handed me and a teaspoonful of ice-cream laid beside my plate, and Pinky began to plead to go home to Mamma McGiven, who was making a plum-pudding that day, I escaped with the little child, promising to send a note in the morning about the "apartments."

Now, Mrs. Huckleberry had fine service and cut-glass and decorated china, and a waiter in white cotton gloves, whose thumb gave such little flavor to the dishes as the dishes boasted. An aristocratic taste pervaded the halls. There was much that was æsthetic about the rugs and *portières*, the panels and the screens. All were on their good behavior, and I could have thrown the house into fits by bringing in a few cases of Pommery Sec to last over a Sunday reunion. I think a small bottle would provide an orgie of the wildest kind for the water-color family of Mrs. Huckleberry.

OUR PROFESSORS OF DRAMATIC ART.

I HAD a call last week from Mrs. P. C. Pokeberry and her daughters. Some idea of their ages may be arrived at by their names: the eldest is Amanda Malvina Pokeberry, and the baby of the family is called Pamela. Now "Pamela" was a fashionable novel in the early part of the last century, and that cherished work of fiction called "The Children of the Abbey" was contemporary. Amanda Malvina Fitzallen was the heroine of the latter. I once said to an old lady standing by a horsehair trunk on which, in brass nails, was the name "A. M. F. Welles," "I want to bet you a doughnut your front name is Amanda Malvina Fitzallen," and she laughed and said, "yes, her mother had been a great novel-reader, and was a romantic woman." Therefore you can judge that Pamela Pokeberry is no spring chicken; but you can't judge of my fourth-proof astonishment when I learned that Pamela intended going upon the stage.

These ladies descended on me from a little hamlet called Lansingburg, up in this State. They had been into Troy and Albany, on great occasions, and witnessed what Ma Pokeberry styled the "draymay," as presented by Joseph Proctor and kindred spirits. It seems there used to be a Green Street Theatre in Albany, run by one Captain Smith; and he, or some one in the box-office, was related to the Pokeberrys by marriage. Through this means my friends had seen a good deal of acting. It had finally wakened the artistic yearning in the

bosom of Pamela. The family had been struggling with this wayward girl till they got afraid she was showing signs of despondency. So they gave in to her great desire; and, believing I was just the party to put 'em on the right track—as I say, they called on me.

I looked at Pamela—a tall, raw-boned woman, with dust-colored hair and boiled-onion eyes, a nose bordering on the pug, and a mouth full of the best store-teeth to be found in Albany.

"Can it be possible," thought I, "that this terror is so blind that she takes that mug for a fashion-plate?"

The thought was answered by Ma, who said: "Mely is a beautiful figgur, and the pieces she has spoke to entertainments in our hall have took with everybody. There ain't any doubt but she can act out as well as the best on 'em after a few lessons."

Then it came out they were in pursuit of a teacher. So I gracefully acceded, and went with Mely to interview some of the professors of dramatic art. We parted with Ma and Mandy at Twenty-third Street, by the Fifth Avenue Hotel, and Mely imparted to me the astounding information that they were going to Caswell's to get some of Dixey's Salve. Now the night before they had all been to the Bijou, and I had heard unbounded praises of the "plaster-parish man," as Ma called Dixey. She had regretted an exposure of the leg made by Miss Carson. At this Pokeberry said: "Them uncertain sewing-machines, always a-ripping, was the cause of it; for the poor gal's dress was ripped nigh to the waist, and only that she had powerful long stockings on, it would have been ondecent." But the performance otherwise had delighted 'em, and the plaster-parish man, Dixey, was just

too splendid! So now they were going to get some of his salve.

This was beyond me. Dixey's Salve? I questioned my stage-struck old girl. "Why, certainly, salve—it was *advertised on the curtain.*" They had asked the usher what that salve advertised on the curtain was for, and he told 'em "corns." They have evidently got a humorist up at the Bijou who interprets the Latin to suit his customers.

Mely and I went on our way. I had forgotten to say that the Pokeberrys are wealthy, and Mely gave evidence of her condition in the way of sealskin and by diamond ear-rings. I was piloting no impecunious young miss, but a well-fixed old damsel who was willing and able to pay for being a crank. We had taken the names of a lot of actor-builders, who had been on the boards themselves—a few professors who couldn't do it themselves, but could teach others how to.

The first party we tackled was a playful creature of sixty-five, who giggled a great deal, and told Mely that *Rosalind* was her pie, and she would be perfectly charming in *Beatrice*—her voice was so light and pleasing, and the roguish dimple in her cheek would add much to the vivacity of such characters.

Mely confidentially informed me that a vicious hen had pecked a piece out of her cheek, when she tried to douse her off a nest on which she persistently set with no greater inducement than a china door-knob under her. This scar our obliging old teacher took for a dimple. Now, Mely's aspirations were for something grand and terrible—she wanted to be, as far as I could make out, a female *Jibbenainosay*. The flippant dame, who shook some gray curls at us and hopped this way and that as she said—"but then there was a star danced, and

under that was I born," made a very unfavorable impression on Mely. So we made very little pause at this establishment, but struck out for No. 2.

No. 2 was a dapper little gentleman, who rolled his r's and made eyes at us. He said the full value of the consonants was the key-note of an actor's success; that gesticulation was obsolete—positively no action was necessary—repression of the physical, with mental emphasis, was the article demanded by an advanced civilization. He asked Miss Pamela to recite a selection, and I nearly fainted when she began Collins' "Ode to the Passions," in 3,000 lines. She howled through Rage to Jealousy; when she came to Grief I begged her to desist, as it was too much for me—a great deal too much. She asked my pardon for harrowing up my feelings so, but said she supposed the professor wanted to judge of her power. As he didn't want to enter her for a walking match, he told her he could form a good idea of her endurance without going any further. But "her conception was all wrong; her intonation entirely false; her enunciation wholly faulty. The full value of the consonants should be her first study. Master them, and the rest, including a first-class engagement and star parts, will follow naturally. You need a full course of instruction, miss," said he.

"How long a time does that require?" asked I.

"From three to four years, according to the density of the pupil," returned he. That settled Mely; she wants to act this spring, and come out with the apple-blossoms. We promised to call again and skipped.

The next professor was a lady, who had a sepulchral voice and tragic gestures.

"Your friend has great capacity for the higher walks of the profession," said she to me; and I immediately

thought she meant to train Mely to be a Man Fly and do the ceiling act, when she went on to say that her face and figure admirably fitted her to essay "The Fair Penitent" or "The Mourning Bride." When I mentioned their possible unattractiveness as plays, she coldly informed me that her business was to educate the people up to that standard, and she was pursuing her avocation with that amount of success that she was justified in furnishing the high-class article there would so soon be a demand for.

This sounded reasonable, and Mely began to question her about the toilets worn by the Fair Penitent, and was shown a production of the professoress in this character. The sight of that old-timer closed the interview. We got old molly-grub's terms, and we fled.

Then we tried two actors—sterling artists of enormous ability—that managers dare not engage, as they are too rich for their blood. The fat one gargled and the lean one crackled at us. They both said Mely betrayed great talent, and, they thought, had a career before her if she went upon the stage. One recommended her to essay such rôles as *Fanchon* and *La Cigale*, as her nose was so adapted for such parts, and the other advised her to study *Lucrezia Borgia* and *Lady Macbeth*, as she had great tragic possibilities about her mouth.

Mely finally thought she would try one other teacher before settling with either of these old he-landmarks, and we went off up-town to see a certain reputable actress, who is going to teach the young idea how to act. We found the lady and stated the case.

"What characters have you seen that you think you would like to play?" asked she.

"Well," said Mely, "I think there's a good chance for any one in *Juliet;* but I should dress her modern. I

never could abide to wear such clothes as most of the *Juliets* I see wear."

"You're not young enough for *Juliet*," said the fatally frank actress.

"I don't see why I could not make myself look young on the stage. They all do," retorted Mely, with much vinegar.

"There's no make-up known to the theatrical profession that can make you look like *Juliet*. You might do *Lady Capulet;* but certainly that's the only part in that play you can hope to meddle with. It is throwing away money to pay for lessons; they can do you no good. You are much too old to think of going on the stage, and the only lines of business a manager would tolerate you in, those of second old women, or utility, are already crowded with people whose experience will get them positions before your claims are heard. I can't for the life of me see why you should dream of anything so wild at your age. If you have a comfortable home and means to keep it, I should advise you to do almost anything before attempting to get upon the stage."

"I believe you advertise for pupils?" put in Mely, angry, as a woman scorned is apt to be.

"I do," retorted the actress, calmly. "I shall be very glad to procure them; but I shall never waste my time nor another woman's money fostering a crazy ambition that can never amount to anything more than disappointment and regret on both sides."

Mely is not discouraged. She is going to appear without instruction. She heard one professor discourse on teaching the art analytically. She doesn't know what that is, but it must be simple or he wouldn't have laid so much stress on his method. The same man said his principles were derived from nature; and so Mely, like

the Irish Alderman who opposed buying several gondolas for the park lake, but "belaved in getting a male and a faymale gondola and letting nature take its coorse," will rely on these principles and let nature take its course.

THE HORRORS OF MOVING.

THERE's no mortal sort of doubt in my mind that the woman who keeps house twenty years and moves once every five years, goes at the end of her time into a nice rosewood coffin with satin trimmings, content, willing—glad to go and escape truckmen and carpet-cleaners. I believe that if any one brought in a first-class casket just now—the plumbing in it all right, the gas all on, the hinges working easy, the decorations fresh and becoming, I'd get in by myself and lay a stuffed dove on my stomach, I'm so disgusted, so sick and sorry, so weary and worn out with the inevitable horror of moving. "Three removes are as bad as a fire," says the proverb. Are they? Well, this one flitting of mine lays as far over the burning of Moscow as the telegraph wires over the clothes-lines.

I have been the prey of more scoundrelly tradespeople; I have fallen into the clutches of more knaves during the last ten days of my life, than in any ten previous years. About the merry month of May a swarm of defrauders, like the locusts of Egypt, swoop down upon the unwary house-keeper. And, oh! how they gobbled the Gusher! Some one advised the repairing of all damaged furniture before moving. She paid out something like fifteen dollars for casters on the legs of chairs. Some one else recommended carpet renovaters. She was struck by a gayly painted cart from some Broadway deceiver named Smith, who toted off her floor furniture and brought it back

several degrees dirtier than it ever was before, and with a bill that shook up the Gusher's nervous system much better than he had shaken the carpets.

Three guileless-looking men, with cots on their knees, put them down in the new house and came round with a bill of twenty more dollars. Painters, paperers, cleaners, and kalsominers daubed about and shirked work, but never failed to turn up with tremendous bills on Saturday night.

Thursday will be a day long remembered. Ichabod packed a pair of slippers and fell over exhausted, while some one sent for a cab to convey him to his club. He rattled away as gay and debonair as if moving day was a festival which he had established.

This was the last pleasing incident of the twenty-four hours. Men and trucks filled in the rest of it. An atmosphere of oaths, beer, and tobacco pervaded the place. A crash occurred with extreme regularity, and I discovered that a man with a centre-table in his arms can swear harder and oftener than under any other circumstances.

About eight o'clock on that fateful night, amid the thickening shadows, one might have descried a delicate form, with a section of stove-pipe and the cover of a refrigerator, a plaster cast of George Washington, and a smut spot on the end of her nose. That was the utterly broken-up Gusher, going to her new house!

This experience has not been without its interesting lesson. The Gusher will buy new chairs next time; they come cheaper than casters. The Gusher will kill the carpet-renovater before he ever gets a rug of hers out of the house. It will be cheaper and pleasanter to bury him in the back yard than to pay him at the front door. The Gusher will never move again. She will

give her traps away. She will have a bonfire of 'em. She will raffle 'em off as if they were eight-day clocks or turkeys ; but she will never, never move again !

The *Tribune* is authority for a statement that awakens a ray of hope in my heart. The Sunday issue of that journal tells us of a new scheme to be put into operation at once. It promises a big kitchen, centrally located, a first-class *chef* at its head and a regiment of cooks under him, a lot of patent wagons full of steam-pipes and ice-boxes, to enable 'em to deliver soups hot and salads cold. It assures us a fine bill of fare at reasonable rates, and holds out a hope of rescue from incompetent Biddies to a thousand anxious house-keepers. Professor Blot promised all this long ago. He talked wisely of hot boxes covered with felt (a want long felt), of hampers fed with heat, and feed kept hot with lead. This naturally led us to believe in great things ; but the fulfilment of his promises never came.

May that benignant fate that sits up aloft ordain the success of this scheme ! Life would become a dream of bliss if only soups could be turned on at faucets like hot and cold water, and steaks be cut off in sections as they do the tape from the ticker. But men will bend their gigantic inventive powers to the perfecting of a machine to make cocktails, or a self-acting swearer, or an automatic poker-player.

A RECOLLECTION OF CHILDHOOD.

THIRTY years ago by the town clock the little two-and-a-half-foot Gusher was led by the hand into a hotel parlor where a select concert was given. A certain Mr. Strakosch played the piano; a little Russian named Miska Hansen did the fiddle to fits, and a small girl my own size, black as an ink-bottle, with a pair of yellow satin pantalettes on her slim legs, stood by the pianist's side and sang: "Ah! Non Giunge." There was a lump like an Adam's apple in the little creature's throat, and no canary ever had a sweeter voice.

We played next day together on a balcony of the hotel, and I lost my child's heart to Adelina Patti. The Gusher had a noble voice of mammoth proportions, that could be heard (and often was) a mile away. We organized an opera company immediately, and sang, "Take Now this Ring," till every one in the neighborhood thought it was a twenty-four-foot rope one, and a prize fight was coming off under their pious Connecticut noses.

Just as this combination of Patti and Gusher got well under way, a famous painter and a splendid singer entered our improvised opera-house and stopped the performance.

"Don't do that, my child," he said to Adelina. "You will strain and injure your voice; and that voice will yet hang your neck with diamonds as big as your handsome eyes. That voice will call all the world to kneel at your feet, and the world will obey."

I knew blessed well it was the yellow satin pantalettes that would subjugate the world. I gave in to that, but the jewels I made a stand at.

"And mustn't I strain my voice, father?" I asked. "Will my voice ever call the world to kneel?"

"I think it will call 'em to stand and deliver," answered that virile parent; "for if nature ever fitted out at birth a natural highwayman, an incipient pirate, an embryo free-lance, here it is!" and he laid his hand tenderly on my snarly head.

The little Patti left that country town on the next day, Monday, and the Gusher mourned her till Tuesday, when she transferred her affection to Charles Freeman, the American giant, who, in company with an India-rubber man, came to the hotel for show purposes.

AN INGERSOLL LECTURE.

I WENT Sunday night to hear Ingersoll tell all about Liberty—as if I didn't know all about it, and didn't take all sorts of liberties with everything and everybody!

If Ingersoll had studied his background I think he would have altered the position of some of his similes.

He made a very telling argument by saying that in all things we had progressed the last five thousand years, save in religion. He described the first man in his dug-out, through all the transitions of nautical achievements, till he reached the magnificent vessel breasting the ocean with steam and sail, to-day. He described the primitive tom-tom, and said if the man who beat it had said, "This is the one perfect instrument, dropped, by an enraptured performer in heaven, upon earth; no improvement shall be made; the hair of the horse and the intestines of the cat shall have no voice in the matter!" why, we would to-day be without our Albert Weber, and devoid of our William Steinway. Ovide Musin would be without an occupation, and Dave Braham never been heard of.

Then he spoke of the sharpened arrow-head, the cross-bow, the arquebus, the blunderbus, the mitrailleuse, and the last cannon, which carries a detonating, combusting cartridge through a stone wall and round a corner. Then he said that the skulls, from that of the man in the dug-out to that of the inventor of the needle-gun, had undergone the same change; and naturally we began to examine the heads on the stage.

As compared with the orator of the evening, it was the man in the dug-out and the inventor all over again. And 'way down at the end was a man with a particularly small top-knot. Every time Ingersoll wanted to return to the seed of his argument, he said: "And here, my friend in the dug-out"—or, "The man with the small skull"; and he would come down to the very chair, with outstretched hands, as if to lay 'em on that special cocoanut.

As middle-man of the first row, was a tall, big old fellow who approved heartily of every sentiment, and beamed his approbation; and on his right sat a sour brother, who had by accident got on the stage, a man who thought he knew it all, and was, as Ingersoll said, "orthodox in consequence." This was a bad lot. A cynical sneer played on his Mephistophelean countenance at Ingersoll's best joke; and when the philosopher launched his most irrefutable arguments against the doctrines of Calvin and Luther, he looked unutterable things, and moved in his seat as if to say: "If I should get on my hind legs, what would become of yon orator?"

After the manner of "Pilgrim's Progress," I christened all the occupants of the chairs. There was Mr. Ready Believer; there was Stiffneckstickitout; there was Little Skullthinksmall; there was Pugnaciouskickback; and then I drew comparisons between the landscape and the background, much to Ingersoll's advantage. There's nothing small, apparently, about Robert. He's got a wide smile, and a spreading girth, and generous legs, and plenty of reach, and a cracking big head!

And he bids for popularity among women. He doesn't say that cold feet should be grounds for separation between man and wife, but he does say that no woman should live with a cross man; and I was glad of it, for I

thought of my chum, who is half distracted, twenty-five hours of the day, about a man who is so supremely selfish, that to read her death in the *Herald* wouldn't move him half as much as to find the soup he wanted wasn't on the *menu* of his club.

Why, that woman has lived days without one word from him, and nights as utterly forsaken and alone as if she'd been on an uninhabited island. She's been snubbed and pulled up, when she's been distancing him on the first quarter. She's known months to pass, and the only evidence of affection he gave was by kissing her lady friends. She could have put a blister on a polar bear's tail, and found him a pleasanter companion thereafter than this husband was, for whom she was putting out every ability and making every effort. She was there Sunday night, and when Ingersoll opened out on the cross husbands, I was pleased; for she doesn't take any counsel from me. Perhaps the applause that greeted the sentiment conveyed to her some conviction of its truth.

FRAGMENTS.

TIME brings nothing but decay to us; and I think it the happier fate to drop off the bough with one fatal touch of blight, than linger to come quashing down an unsightly mass of corruption. The good, commonplace woman, who has had in her youth neither beauty nor ability, who has passed through girlhood and middle age without excitement or success, may enjoy all the discomforts of old age. But for women like Adelaide Neilson or Selina Dolaro—it seems to me they should fittingly sweep down the breeze, like brilliant autumn leaves, passing from view in all the splendor of crimson and gold, rather than survive the blasts of winter, to be pushed off in their brown and withered state by the pesky little buds of spring.

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I think there is a great mistake about this business of death. You take twelve dead and twelve living faces, and study their expressions. You will find anxiety, sorrow, discontent, and pain stamped in more or less distinct lines on the living faces. You will find the seal of settled peace—and a knowing look, if not almost a smile—on every one of those marble masks. I always turn from the contemplation of the dead with a firm conviction that it is by no means the worst that ever happened to 'em. And it's a blessed poor result of the Christian religion, that everybody is afraid to die, and that when death is threatened to any one, the moralists must draw hair-standing comparisons between the past glory of the victim, and impending destruction.

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As for the atheism and unbelief of the age, it's a very sad thing. There's a certain religion of Nature, that dwells in every intelligent soul, irrespective of forms and creeds. We all feel that our surest hold on any good hereafter, is the amount of good we can accomplish on this earth. We all feel that if an insensate turnip possesses a reproductive power that will enable it to turn up green and lively after being planted, we should be equal in ability to that merry little vegetable; that some way, somewhere, and somehow, we will "see you later." The loving, faithful, pure, and charitable human heart has no need to buy of speculators outside, when it gets to the ticket-taker called Peter. There are complimentaries issued to such as these: "And of such is the kingdom of Heaven!"

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No! I maintain that the loss of a little child is the one loss that years never obliterate. The man's strong hand that has made mother's path smooth; the woman's loving hand that has lain on mother's tired head; Johnny's big voice that whooped it up after school, and Jimmy's coaxing tones that beguiled you of every new trinket, can leave you desolate for a time; but the one great, fresh sorrow—the one open grave—is that made by the baby! The clinging clasp of that aimless hand, the tiny voice that shapes but one small word, is the one that can reach across all dividing time, and ring in your ears till the day of your death. The human heart recovers from all other losses; but let an empty cradle once extinguish the light in a parent's life, and there is no power that can re-kindle the flame again!

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There's a great deal of fuss made by most people in getting ready to die. They have to be groomed by

ministers; they have to undergo a sort of ante-mortem embalming ; they are stuffed full of good things; as much of the original sin as the theological massage can take out of 'em is taken; they put their thoughts on the elevated roads, and get as much of their baggage checked as their ticket will allow. But, believe me, that eye is the steadiest, that heart the calmest, that soul the bravest, that belongs to the man or woman who can see the gates of the tomb, beyond some gates they have builded for sheltering age or fostering youth. The knell of death will be robbed of its terror if glad bells they have set ringing mingle their music with the solemn clang of eternity. Set aside enough money to bury you decently, O ye millionaires! and then invest every cursed dollar you have, before you die, in alleviating the misery this world is full of!

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I believe Peter Cooper is taking more comfort where he is to-day than any other millionaire who ever died in New York. As one after another has joined him, that philanthropic old patriot has asked what they did for the education, protection, and nourishment of the young, the defenceless, and the needy, before they came away. And when each one answered, "Nothing!" he must have thought of his Institute, his Free Art Union, and his poor man's Reading-room, with genuine satisfaction. Almost every one lives as if there were no hereafter. The stiffest Christians in the pot seem to believe that they will never know anything more of this world after they leave it; otherwise they would fix up the landscape, so that it would be pleasant to contemplate from their bird's-eye bulge on us.

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The struggle of man's intellect with the problem of

immortality is always interesting ; though the usual view of heaven is not wholly satisfactory to a rational human being. That beyond the far, mysterious stars there is an abiding place for the reasoning faculties and affections we possess here, every one hopes; and certainly, if our condition hereafter depends upon our conduct just now, it must be that ministering to our fellow-creatures, doing good to man and woman, is the only way to get a lien on the mansion not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Appoint for every man an hour to die, and see to what use he would put the intervening time. You would not find him in Wall Street, attending to the stock market. With a dim instinct that he was making himself solid, he would be hurrying up his ante-mortem record of charity and good works. And so, if this legend should be hung out upon the sky—"This property on easy terms; be charitable, and move in," earth would be heaven, and sin and sorrow would pass away.

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Time doesn't handle a man with a thicker pair of gloves than he puts on for a woman ; but just tell a man at fifty or sixty that he isn't in the ring, and an enticing and inspiring spectacle—and you'll hear a verdict, and get an opinion as is an opinion. It's as I have often said to you: Pull every feather off a man's dear head ; yank every tooth out of a sweet, dear man's mouth ; furrow him an inch deep with Time's claw ; rheumatize his joints ; raise Cain with him generally, and he sits up and shows his necktie, and think's he's a darling that ought to paralyze every woman!

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Oh, airs ! insufferable airs ! If people only knew how small an impression they make, I believe they would be left at home with account-books, and pill-boxes, and sick

cats, and other disagreeable things. Oh, airs, airs! pride of place and pride of person! Of what small account are all the pompous people who chipper and flirt their feathers in the public eye! If we can only hang on to this dirt-pile long enough, we shall see the gloomy earth-worm sunning himself on the proud head, so full of airs to-day; and a colony of scheming ants carrying out their tiny plans along that breast that to-night is smiling with self-importance. If we don't possess the necessary gravitation, then the airy one will superciliously read our grave-stone, and say: "Really? dear me—dead! But what could you expect of such a person?"

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Good God! I want human hands about me, even after I am dead.

One day, for me the sturdy spade
Shall ply its trade;
  One day its mate, the shovel, shall perform its task.
And when those first, last friends of man have made
The narrow bed in which my form is laid—
  O Mother Earth! one boon of thee I ask:
Send up from out my breast some lovely flowers
  Whose far-pervading perfume shall allure,
And in the bondage of those dreadful hours
  The blessed touch of human hands secure!

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After all, we grow old from the inside. It's the oil of an occupied mind that lights the old lamp of life. It's the loving, sacrificing, busy heart, forgetting self, that is forgotten by Time.

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If beyond this heartache and headache we call living there is any reward for the dwellers on earth, the crown must rest on that golden head that never conceived an

evil thing; the palm must reach that gentle, generous hand that was helpful and open to all.

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There is an instinct in every human heart that there is something beyond. There's not a tribe upon the earth but cherishes a belief that this life leads up to something better, from the Persian, with his eternally beautiful houris peopling the Mohammedan heaven, to the woman Down East, who knew paradise was passed in a rocking-chair without even knitting work to do!

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I hold many anniversaries of death, if I cannot escape remembering them, at home. I never want to look upon a picture of my lost ones. There is no panacea for the grave but forgetfulness. It is a blessed provision that we eternally forget its inevitable call upon ourselves; and the only comfort time brings is its power to efface remembrance of its former visits.

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The Gusher, on this Christmas eve, with a reminiscent hand under a retrospective head, thinks of all the kindly, loving words she has heard from the professional people she likes so much during the year just past, and smiles; looks out beyond the majestic arches of the magnificent High Bridge, that bends its benignant stone battlements above her windows, upon a slender yellow road that, like a sallow finger, points away to a grave in Mount Vernon, where lies the fondest female heart that ceased to beat in all the long year—and bows her head and weeps. But, smiling or sighing or crying, she extends both hands to those she loves and to those who love her, to those she has loved and to those who never will love her, and says, at this season when good will reigns—"May every joy come to you and with you abide!"

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If there's anything on earth I love it's the dawn of a new day. The long, far-singing noises of the night stop. The ashen-gray colors stand. When, low along the horizon, appears a streak of light—rosy, golden, beautiful—each instant it intensifies. Clouds may come; a tempest may close in with the darkness of the night; but the birth of a new day in its sudden glory is a promise of joy, a setting of Hope's bow in the heaven of the heart; and over the sweet, soft, helpless head of a new-born child I bow in adoration. Mystery, possibility—the whence and the where. The waxen calla leaf of a stainless life begun, on which joy or sorrow must begin its history, is to me a wonder—a wondrous wonder.

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There's no doubt Nature knows her business. It's as well to let the dame alone and ask no questions. If we are all here another Christmastide we shall be glad; and if we are not here, I earnestly hope we shall still be glad.

"TIGER LILY'S" RACE.

*From the Play of "Philip Herne." Act I.**

MRS. HERNE.

(*To Philip.*) Where have you been all these years?

PHILIP.

Well, it's a long story, mother; but this much you shall hear at once. You remember Viscaronda, the Spanish ranchman, whose son was in college with me? Well, we both cut away to his father's place in California. I've been with horses till I'm a sort of Centaur. He's brought a stable of "flyers" East for the fall meetings, and I'm the crack rider from the Golden Gate.

MRS. HERNE.

Oh, my son! and I had such hopes for your future! A jockey! How came you to embrace such a life?

PHILIP.

Accident, mother! Accident, that shapes a man's fate when education, influence, and endeavor are put forth in vain. Viscaronda's a charming fellow, and his heart was set on seeing the success of his pet racer "Altamont" on the Oakland track, last fall a year. We came down from the ranch with quite a stable. There

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was "Altamont," his half-brother "Raoul," "Dundee Kate," "Estelle," and half-a-dozen more—all flyers—and in the party the "Tiger Lily." Now the "Lily" had once been the pride of the Pacific Slope; but for several seasons she'd just eaten her head off, living in clover, as the mate of "Estelle." They loved each other so well, that each pined during a separation, so Viscaronda brought the "Lily" to satisfy "Estelle."

MRS. HERNE.

He must be a kind-hearted man.

PHILIP.

Oh, the best in the world! Well, the very day before the opening of the meeting, "Altamont" broke down. I always shall believe he was tampered with, for he had a walk-over with the entries. Viscaronda was inconsolable. No one of all his stud could fill "Altamont's" place, and in his grief he burst out: "The scoundrels! they've beaten me! Oh, if 'Kate' were only the 'Tiger Lily' that she once was, I'd substitute her for 'Altamont,' and yet redeem the ranch!" Now for months I had given the "Lily" a daily brush on the circle, and there had been times when, with a little crowding, she had let out with a burst of her old speed that was electrical. We understood each other. That's a great thing for a horse and rider. She'd come to know the touch of my hand, the sound of my voice. She answered the pressure of my knee, and was as much company to me as a human being. I went and looked the "Lily" over. Glossy, sleek, light-limbed and alert, in her gentle eyes shone a ray of something that might have been recollection; but I tried to believe that the fire still burned, though under ashes; so I just explained things to her.

MRS. HERNE.

Explain things to a *horse?*

FLORRIE.

Oh, yes; it's always best! I have to reason with "Rover" every day.

PHILIP.

You're right, my darling. And so I told the "Lily" the strait her master was in. I dwelt upon the necessity of overcoming the infirmities of age for one brief hour, and I showed her how, in that hour, she could cover herself with glory, confuse the conspirators who were "downing" her master, and win my heart entirely. Well, I don't know which argument won.

FLORRIE.

I do! She wanted your heart.

PHILIP.

Perhaps. Anyway, I left her, feeling the tingle of success from my fingers to my feet. I went to Viscaronda and said: "Put the 'Lily' in 'Altamont's' place, and leave the rest to me!"

MRS. HERNE.

You enthusiastic boy! And did you win him to your way of thinking?

PHILIP.

Did I? Well, I guess I did! I compelled belief in that dear old deposed queen of the turf. Oh, you should have heard the sneers that followed the announcement that Viscaronda had substituted the "Tiger Lily" of the

past, for the horse they were all afraid of, and that his rider was an unknown! "Altamont's" rider was a Mexican; he thought, with the rest, that the failure of the star horse had rattled the old man who believed in your boy. Under cover of the night, I gave my pet a lesson or two, and then the morning broke that was to make or mar me as a prophet—a day as perfect as a pearl. Oh, mother, a California day is a poem in the air! You hear music; you breathe fragrance! You seem set to a tune that is played by your heart! I had another talk with my lady "Lily," and even as we came up for the flag, in front of the grand stand, there was something in us both that turned the tide. Oh, mother, that was a race! Five were in it, but four were followers. On the home stretch of the first heat, we took the lead and kept it. "Good!" shrieked the crowd, as they saw the time; "but she can't keep it up! she can't repeat!" Now, a triumph that is unexpected always wakes more enthusiasm than a foregone conclusion. There were twenty thousand people on that track, and they went wild over a miracle. They stormed the shed to compliment me and gaze at the mare; but I took my girl aside for further confidences. We were going in for the deciding heat—it was a heat-race—and everything was yet at stake. I clasped my arms about her neck, and put my face to hers. We promised each other the world if we won. I flung myself upon her back, and, in perfect accord, determined and invincible, we faced the music! Oh, mother! there was one moment, when "Pioneer," an iron-gray horse of great speed, stole up. I glanced at the side, where the green growing things and the planted posts had been flying by like the teeth of a comb—there was a gleam of gray and a flash of red—"Pioneer" and his rider's crimson jacket! My tightened grasp, my

warning knee, conveyed the news of danger to my darling. Her beautiful little head stiffened, the delicate pink nostrils swelled—with a snort of defiance she let out. I was astride the wind! The scent of a hay-rick at the quarter-pole, and the "Ess. Bouquet" of the grand stand, struck me full in the face at one time. Fainter and fainter fell the castanets of "Pioneer's" feet, as he was left behind. Alone, victorious, bursting with joy, the "Tiger Lily" and I swept under the wire! And before I returned, to be made a hero of, I stooped my head, and the falling tears on her glossy neck, and the whispered words in her waiting ear, were sweeter to the dear old mare and me than all the tumult that followed!